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EIGHT

DISCOURSES

ON THE

CONNECTION

BETWEEN THE

OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT

CONSIDERED AS TWO PARTS OF THE SAME

DIVINE REVELATION;

AND DEMONSTRATIVE OF

THE GREAT DOCTRINE OF

ATONEMENT:

ACCOMPANIED WITH

A PRELIMINARY DISCOURSE

RESPECTFULLY ADDRESSED

To the Younger Clergy:

CONTAINING SOME REMARKS ON THE

LATE PROFESSOR CAMPBELL's

ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY:

BY THE

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CONTENTS.

Page

Preliminary Discourse - - - - - - - 1

DISCOURSE I.

HEB. XIII. 8.

Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever - - - - - - - - - 151

DISCOURSE II.

HEB. XIII. 8.

Jesus Christ, &c. - - - - - - - - 197

DISCOURSE III.

HEB. XIII. 8.

Jesus Christ, &c. - - - - - - - - 225

DISCOURSE IV.

1 COR. I. 30.

Who of God is made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption - - - - - - - - - 255

DIS-

DISCOURSE V.

1 COR. I. 30.

Who of God, &c. - - - - - - - - 293

DISCOURSE VI.

1 COR. 1. 30.

Who of God, &c. - - - - - - - - 341

DISCOURSE VII.

ROM. VI. 23.

The Wages of Sin is Death; but the Gift of God is eternal Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord - - - - - - - - 377

DISCOURSE VIII.

HEB. XII. 1. 2.

Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a Cloud of Witnesses, let us lay aside every Weight, and the Sin that doth so easily beset us; and let us run with Patience the Race that is set before us: looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our Faith - - - - - - - - - - - 419

itself has failed in establishing a general standard for religious truth. In consequence of the vain reasonings, corrupt affections, and fanciful conceptions of mankind, which the arch Deceiver has industriously employed, for the purpose of obliterating that benign plan, which was graciously intended to counteract the mischief he had wrought; the science of Theology has undergone more frequent and strange metamorphoses than any other science whatever. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, when that light which was designed to lead mankind in the way of peace, has, in consequence of the false mediums through which it has passed, been turned into comparative darkness; that the creature who is to be conducted by it, should be left at some loss with respect to the course he has to take: in other words; if, amid the perplexity of various opinions, and the parade of imaginary improvement, the mind of man should frequently lose sight of that sure ground of faith and hope, to which it was the chief object of Revelation to direct his thoughts.

truth alone which ought to challenge attention.

The substance of the Christian faith, must for ever remain what the Scripture has fixed it. And to the doctrine of Atonement the general tenor of Scripture bears testimony.—To reason then with the Apostle; "what if some do not believe; shall their unbelief make the faith of God of none effect?—God forbid." God must be true, though every man be found a liar.

From whence it follows, that the diversity of opinion which prevails on Religion, proves the imperfection and corruption of the human understanding, not the fallibility of the standard which has been set up for its direction.

The Religion of God, like man when first created, came perfect from his hands. And because it did so, and is calculated to answer the purpose of its divine institution, by furnishing that knowledge which is necessary to man's fallen condition, it has been the continued object of the grand enemy of mankind, to corrupt or pervert it through every stage of its progress. Hence the authority of Divine Revelation

itself

itself has failed in establishing a general standard for religious truth. In consequence of the vain reasonings, corrupt affections, and fanciful conceptions of mankind, which the arch Deceiver has industriously employed, for the purpose of obliterating that benign plan, which was graciously intended to counteract the mischief he had wrought; the science of Theology has undergone more frequent and strange metamorphoses than any other science whatever. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, when that light which was designed to lead mankind in the way of peace, has, in consequence of the false mediums through which it has passed, been turned into comparative darkness; that the creature who is to be conducted by it, should be left at some loss with respect to the course he has to take: in other words; if, amid the perplexity of various opinions, and the parade of imaginary improvement, the mind of man should frequently lose sight of that sure ground of faith and hope, to which it was the chief object of Revelation to direct his thoughts.

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superseded the infallible standard of religious truth: and the effect in both cases has not failed to correspond with the cause.

On spiritual subjects nothing can be discovered by the light of unassisted reason. What is to be known on those subjects, man must be contented to learn in the way and degree in which God has thought fit to teach him. To consider, therefore, any spiritual subject by the light of Nature and Reason, whilst we neglect that Revelation whose professed object it is to furnish all necessary information upon it; is to reject day-light and an open road to travel in, that we may shew our genius or our self-sufficiency, by taking an adventurous walk among pits in the dark, at the risk of falling headlong into the first that lies open in our way. In this case there is doubtless too much at stake. Consequently to every wise man, opinions, however plausible and ingenious, will afford but a poor compensation for any deviation from the standard of Divine Truth.

Rational Criticism, it must at the same time be admitted, can seldom, if ever, be misemployed. But to be entitled to the honour-

honourable distinction of rational criticism, it must proceed on this acknowledged principle; that what has been revealed must be true; and consequently that no defect of comprehension on our parts can justify an argument against the clear letter of Scripture. Under the sanction of this distinction it will be readily allowed, that the science of Divinity owes much of its present improved state to that talent for close reasoning and critical investigation, which distinguishes the writings of some modern divines; and renders them hardly less serviceable to the cause of Christianity, than the pious, learned, and unwearied labours of its more early professors.

Soundness in the faith, and an hearty zeal for its promotion, were the excellencies which particularly marked the character of the primitive Fathers of the Church. Their writings, for the most part, had neither elegance of language, nor ingenuity of thought to recommend them. It sufficed that they were plain, simple, and convincing. Philosophical researches, metaphysical subtleties, and vain reasonings, accompanied the introduction of human learning

learning into the science of theology. And to this ill-judged mixture of Heathenish and Christian ideas, the truth and simplicity of the Sacred Writings had well nigh fallen a sacrifice. It is to be lamented, that such is the condition of even the best things below, that we could not have the use in this case, where it was so much wanted, and where it may always be most profitably employed, without having to deprecate the abuse.

From this first state of degeneracy the science of Divinity was not recovered, when the barbarous ignorance, which followed the desolating footsteps of the Northern invaders, put a fatal stop to the progress of all intellectual improvement. The dark night of bigotry and superstition, at length giving place to the returning dawn of enlightened reason, this divine science emerging from her long state of cloistered concealment, gradually shook off the unintelligible jargon of the schools, and once more presented an object worthy the attention of rational minds.

The

The seventeenth century bore witness to such a rapid progress of the human understanding, as no preceding age had experienced. Human reason, by a more than ordinary exertion, seemed desirous of redeeming the time she had lost. The science of divinity could not fail to reap advantage from the increasing knowledge of an improving age: and was manifestly travelling back towards that state of primitive perfection, from which it had long since departed. But as evil sometimes arises out of good, so it may be questioned, whether the same reasons which confessedly contributed to the revival and re-establishment of true divinity, have not since proved instrumental to its corruption.

Human reason, it should seem, had not long been restored to the full exercise of her just rights, before she discovered the same disposition which had been manifested in Paradise, to set aside the letter of Revelation, and to bring all spiritual subjects under her own immediate jurisdiction. Human learning at the same time making hasty advances towards the supposed zenith

nith of its perfection, Divines, in compliance with the prevailing taste, had recourse to it; instead of applying, as they ought to have done, to the Oracles of God for assistance. Thus human learning and human reasoning, grafting themselves on the old and decaying stock of divine knowledge, produced in time, a system of such a mixed and heterogeneous quality, as bore too imperfect a resemblance to the simple and substantial character of primitive divinity, to be acknowledged for its genuine descendant. When in compliment perhaps to a learned age, the Christian minister classed himself with the unenlightened sage of antiquity, and condescended to draw arguments on the subject of his profession, from the impure fountain of heathen philosophy; it is not to be wondered at, that *natural* religion, that base born child of the human imagination, should take advantage of the ground on which it was imprudently placed; and having first claimed precedence of divine Revelation, should by degrees gain a firm establishment at the expence of its utter rejection.

This

This fatal consequence of an undue mixture of sacred and profane knowledge, sound divinity has to put in the balance against the benefit she derived from the change of dress, in which an improving age had clothed her.

They who have attended to the state of this science, in its different stages of progression, will best determine what comparison the polished systems of some modern divines will bear with the simple, less adorned, and less sophisticated productions of a preceding age. And should it be found, that refinement and paradox have not unfrequently occupied the place of sound criticism; they need not hesitate to pronounce, that the present age is, in some respects at least, gone backwards in the study of the most important of all sciences; and that instead of knowing more, we for the most part know perhaps much less than the generality of those, whom we affect so lightly to esteem.

The fallibility of ancient Commentators, discoverable in some instances, no sooner became the subject of remark, than the human mind, as if possessed of a general distrust

distrust of antiquity, seemed prepared to receive any interpretation that had novelty and ingenuity to recommend it. A field being thus opened for the boundless exertion of literary abilities, and the specious display of fanciful interpretations, it has sometimes happened, that, in a rage for improvement, old things have been hastily rejected before they have been thoroughly understood, and before the value of the new ones, substituted in their stead, has been duly ascertained.

Of the ancient Commentators in general it may be said, that in their interpretations of Scripture, they looked no farther than to the obvious sense of the passage under consideration. It would have been as well, perhaps, if modern Commentators had for the most part followed their example; or at least had not overlooked the obvious sense, through eagerness to discern latent meanings. The science of Divinity, we may venture to say, would have suffered less from the want of originality in the writings of its Professors, than it has from the fanciful speculations and specious improvements of its pre-

tended

tended reformers. And before we pronounce decisively on the supposed short-sightedness of the old Divines, it may be proper to consider, whether modern Divines have not carried their boasted talent for discernment, to a blameable extreme; by pretending to see further into some subjects, than it was ever intended they should see, and by attempting to draw meanings out of words and actions, which they were never intended to convey. How far the force of this remark ought to extend, sound judgement alone must determine.

To place subjects in a different point of view from that in which they have been hitherto seen, and to strike new lights out of materials already worn, as it were, smooth by frequent collision, seems at first sight to denote a superior understanding; and the laudable ambition of appearing to possess such an understanding, has tempted many ingenious and learned men, unguardedly and unadvisedly, to forsake the plain beaten road of science, where they were constrained to tread for the most part in the steps of those who had gone before

before them; for fancied paths of their own tracing, which presented a more unbounded scope for the indulgence of their own peculiar notions, and for a more liberal display of their own particular attainments. That singularly able man, the late Bishop Warburton, presented the world with an ill-digested mass of heathen learning, which by a vigour of intellect peculiarly characteristic, he had industriously brought together for the purpose of proving that the Jews, the chosen people of God, were really less informed with respect to the spiritual concerns of another life, than the most ignorant of the idolatrous nations that surrounded them. To have demonstrated the divine legation of Moses by a regular method of proof drawn from a consideration of the tenor of the history, the life, and miraculous acts of that great prophet, would have been natural, but it would not have been singular. Something new and surprising was to be attempted, which might astonish mankind. The comprehensive but visionary genius of a Warburton was displayed, and the public has marked the success of the paradoxical undertaking. " Literæ

nimiæ

nimiæ et disputandi fervor, hominum eruditorum animos a *sensu communi* avocant, nimisque intendendo oculos cæcutiunt."—Eichhorn.

By these general remarks on the progress of Divinity, considered as a science, we are prepared the better to appreciate the present state of it in this country; which, though it confessedly wears more the appearance of a Christian science than it did at some former periods of our history, is still too much adulterated, to be acknowledged for the genuine produce of the Sacred Writings. The discourses from our pulpits are still too often disgraced with a profane mixture of heathen philosophy and natural religion; whilst even those among them which are intended to inculcate the essential doctrines of Christianity, do it, at times, in a manner calculated to lead the hearer to the conclusion, that the Sacred Records are, of all other, the Records most at variance with themselves.

The fact is, knowledge in divinity is not so often derived from the Bible itself, as from some intermediate source at second

cond hand. The perfection of it therefore must correspond with that of the medium through which it passes. Private judgement, in this as in most other cases, is not original in itself; but derived, in a great degree, from the books we read, or the parties with whom we converse. Thus it is that truth and error beget their own likeness; and as the attachment is placed, so will the progeny be continued. Hence it follows that men of education, from a settled bias to the authority of great names, are perhaps as liable to take up with erroneous opinions, as the more vulgar and illiterate.

" It is the fate of scholars to fall early in life into the company of their elders or their equals, from whom they imbibe a set of principles, to which they are soon attached; either because those principles flatter their pride, or encourage their idleness, or agree with their inclinations or appetites; and unless they are blessed with natural strength of mind and rectitude of intention, and favoured by some happy incidents which bring new thoughts to their minds, their reading and conversation

tion flows generally in the same channel through the whole course of their lives; they turn away with scorn from every thing which contradicts their favourite traditions, and thus they live and die dupes of the first information they received."

The foregoing observations, made by one * well acquainted with the workings of the human mind, applies particularly to Divines; whose professional exertions wear the stamp of whatever system has been early established in their heads. Hence it is that opinions, erroneous in themselves, have received a kind of prescriptive authority, by being handed down from one celebrated writer to another; the fallacy of which it required, it should seem, but a small portion of sound judgement, had men been in the habit of directing their judgements to such objects, to discover.

By attending to the writings and discourses of many, otherwise well-informed, Divines, we shall find two points, generally speaking, taken for granted; and

* Rev. W. Jones. "Letters from a Tutor to his Pupils,"—Letter 26—"on Private Judgment."

argued upon accordingly. The first is, that natural religion constitutes the basis of Revelation: the second, that the Jewish dispensation had relation only to *temporal* objects. It is more to be wondered at that positions, demonstrably false in themselves, should originally receive the sanction of the first literary abilities; than that, on the ground of such sanction, they should continue to pass current in the world. But a very moderate exercise of the intellectual powers will be sufficient to convince us, that no uthority, however respectable, can establish positions which have neither reason nor Revelation to support them. It has been repeatedly said, with that air of confidence which generally accompanies conviction, that Revelation is a superstructure on the foundation of natural religion; "than which nothing (we are told) is more manifest throughout the Scriptures; most of whose instructions proceed on the supposition of some previous religious knowledge being in the mind."*

* See Monthly Review for July 1791, on "The Charge of Samuel Lord Bishop of St. David's to the Clergy of his Diocese."

Not

Not admitting the position itself, it must be concluded that we consider the proof here adduced as inadequate to its establishment. The texts generally brought forward as demonstrative on this occasion, are to be found in the first and second chapters of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans. But if these texts are to be understood in the sense in which they have been too generally taken, they make the Apostle inconsistent with himself: for they describe the condition of the Gentiles, previous to their conversion, very different from what St. Paul has represented it to be in every other part of his writings.

Should the position in question be admitted, it follows that natural religion, considered as the foundation of all spiritual knowledge, must have been laid; before Revelation, as a superstructure, could have been raised upon it. In order of time, therefore, natural religion must necessarily have *preceded* Revelation. But does this appear to have been the case? Did natural religion exist previous to the first delivery of Divine Revelation in Paradise? If it did, the Scriptures have furnished

nished a very imperfect account of the most important science of religion; for it has not, in this case, taken the least notice of its supposed origin.

" Most of the instructions in Scripture proceed (it has been said) on the supposition of some previous knowledge being in the mind *." But this proves nothing to the establishment of the position in question, unless it can be made appear, that this previous knowledge, supposed to exist in the human mind, as a ground for future instruction, was itself derived from a mere *natural* source.

In fact from the commencement of Revelation in Paradise, one Revelation has succeeded to another, and one degree of spiritual information has been, as it were, built on that which preceded it, as the circumstances of mankind from time to time required, and the accomplishment of the gracious object the Deity had in view in communicating divine knowledge t o the world, rendered necessary.

* See Monthly Review for July 1791, on the Charge of the Bishop of St. David's.

That

That famous passage, Rom. i. 19, 20. on which so much more has been built than the passage will support, and which does not apply to the case of the *absolutely unenlightened* Heathen; gives the reader to understand only what conclusions may be drawn relative to God, and invisible things, from reason rightly exercised in the works of the Creation. It tells him in fact what may be, not what actually has been; namely, that the invisible things of God may be understood by the things that are made. And we readily subscribe to the position. But we know at the same time, that when man has been left to the mere light of nature, the visible creation has never furnished him with this important intelligence. In fact, when the eyes of man have been opened by Revelation, the visible things of the creation, in their relation to the great Creator of them, have then been seen; but not before. To prove this, and thereby to ascertain what is to be understood by natural religion, properly so called, our conclusion on this subject must be drawn from the condition of man in an *uncivilized*

lized state of nature, in which he may be supposed to be governed by the dictates of *unassisted* reason.

But we will take man in a civilized state, and give him the advantage of all the light which Heathenism originally borrowed from Revelation. And how will the case stand then? The Egyptians were a nation famed for wisdom, particularly for that species of wisdom to be derived from the investigation of natural causes. But what did this wisdom do for them on the subject of religion? So far from being instrumental in bringing them to the knowledge of the true God, it did not even dispose their minds to the reception of that knowledge, when it was actually brought among them.

The Patriarchs, and their posterity, the chosen people of God, sojourned in the Land of Egypt four hundred years. Had the knowledge of the true God been natural to the human mind, it may be supposed that the Egyptians could not fail to have profited under such religious instructors. But the fact was notoriously otherwise. The Israelites, who carried the knowledge

knowledge of the true God into Egypt, were greatly corrupted by their connection with the Egyptians; whilst the Egyptians themselves remained unimproved by it. When the Israelites departed from Egypt, they left the inhabitants of that land, as a nation, in the same state of wretched idolatry, in which they found them, *worshipping the creature instead of* the Creator.

If we carry on our observation to the more advanced civilization of Greece and Rome, we shall have no better proof to produce of the competency of unassisted reason to the attainment of true religion. Dr. Clarke has told us in his Catholic Doctrine (Pref. p. 32. edit. 3.) that the unity of person in the Supreme Nature is the "first principle of natural religion." But the testimony of Cicero, whose writings were prior to the Christian Revelation, must have more weight on the subject of natural religion, than those of Dr. Clarke. "Omnibus innatum est; et in animo quasi insculptum, esse *Deos*." Cic De Naturâ Deor: And what these gods were, which nature pointed out as objects of religious worship,

worship, St. Paul has informed us in the following declaration to his Gentile converts at Galatia: "When ye knew not God, (says the Apostle,) i. e. before your conversion to Christianity, ye did service unto them, which by nature are no gods. But now after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God," &c. Gal. iv. 8. From whence the obvious conclusion is, that had not God been pleased to visit the Gentiles, who sat in darkness, with the light of Revelation through the preaching of the Apostles, they would have remained in the same state of spiritual ignorance in which the Apostles found them; bowing down to wood and stone; waiting on altars dedicated to the *unknown God*, as was the case with the learned Athenians; or worshipping, with the Ephesians, the *great goddess Diana*, and the image supposed to have fallen down from Jupiter. Acts xix. 35.

And shall we say that natural religion, which, during a long night of Pagan darkness, could not distinguish the creature from the Creator, nor an idol from the living God, constitutes the basis of Revelation?

lation? in other words, that the religion of of the true God was built on the foundation of that gross idolatry, which the grand Deceiver of mankind set up in the world for the express purpose of supplanting it?—God forbid!—"I say," says the Apostle, "that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to *devils*, and not to God." 2 Cor. x. 20.—See also Deut. xxxii. 17.

It was well observed by a late eminent Divine,* (than whom no one was better qualified to decide on the present subject,) "that if the reasoning faculty could have inferred with precision any spiritual truth, from an analogy in nature, the only proper ground of natural religion,) it must have been that of a resurrection; which yet did never make any part of the religion or philosophy of the Heathens. This doctrine was at length preached to them by St. Paul, upon unquestionable authority; but, we are told, that "when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, they mocked."

* The late Rev. W. Jones. See his excellent Letter to a Young Gentleman intended for Holy Orders.

Acts

Acts xvii, 32.—It was the best intelligence ever brought into the world: it was published at Athens, a seat of learning, by as great an orator as ever spoke: all nature suggests the truth of it: but philosophers, through wisdom, neither believed nor understood it." What then shall we say of this boast of Deism, *natural religion;* which is often set up in opposition to Revelation; but that it is as mere an idol of the imagination, as any of the Gods which the heathen worshipped.

Man's religious education commenced in the school of divine Revelation. When he went out of that school, false philosophy was ready to take him up at the door, and has since been leading him astray through that boundless field of human imagination, which ultimately terminates in idolatry of one kind or another.

We shall not be thought, we trust, to depreciate the power of human reason, by assigning to her her proper province. A due exercise of the rational faculties will qualify a man to attain the wisdom of this world. But it is divine Revelation that furnishes that knowledge, which can alone

alone make him wise unto salvation. When we see reason, therefore, usurping the place of Revelation, it is time to examine her pedigree and determine her pretensions. And common sense must be sufficient to inform us of what the experience of the world has abundantly confirmed, that reason, by herself, could never discover; *what, even when discovered, reason,* unassisted by grace, has at no time been disposed to receive.

It is with peculiar pleasure that I make a quotation from a celebrated layman * on this subject, because it furnishes the hope, that this heathenish religion of nature is on the eve of being banished from our pulpits; convinced as I am that the Christian religion can receive no advantage from so profane a connection.

" Let the modern reasoner, therefore, who would make as good a religion by the help of nature and his own faculties, as we have received from the lights of Revelation and the doctrines of the Gospel,

* Plain Reasons why we should believe in Christ; addressed to the Patrons of the New Philosophy by R. Cumberland.

take

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take his ground where he will, provided he does not go without the heathen pale, and let him keep it. Let him borrow no assistance from Moses, and let him assume to himself all the lights that he can find, all the rational religion he can collect, not only in the world then known, but in the world since discovered; in all the nations of the East, where reason, surely, as far as arts and sciences were concerned, was in no contemptible state; in America, to the north and south, in all the continents and islands which modern navigation has added to the map of the world, as the Romans knew it in the Augustan age; let him pursue his researches, and when he has made his tour through all their temples and pagodas, let him erect his trophies to reason, and publish his discoveries with what confidence he may. Alas! for mankind and the boasted dignity of human reason, he will bring back nothing but a raree-show of idols; a museum of monsters; Egyptian, Indian, and Chinese deformities and nondescripts; the creatures of earth, air, and sea: snakes, reptiles, even stocks and stones

stones promoted to be Gods; and man, degenerating and debasing himself, to kneel down before these dumb divinities, and pay them worship.—And now, if this is all that he, who opposes the religion of Revelation, can discover and make prize of in the religion of reason, I give him joy of his discoveries, and wish him candidly to declare if, upon result of those discoveries, he can believe so well of himself as to suppose that had he lived in those days, he would have found out any thing more than was found out by those who lived in them: whether, if he had singly engrossed the collected wisdom of the seven wise men of Greece, he would have revealed a better system of religion to the world than Christ has revealed; and whether he would have known the will of God better than God knew himself, and more clearly have communicated it to mankind."

The second position which frequently presents itself to notice in modern sermons, and which proves that the Old Testament is less understood than it formerly was, respects the spiritual blindness and ignorance

ignorance of the Jewish nation. When the subject of the Jewish dispensation is introduced into Sermons, the hearers are generally given to understand, that the Jews lived under a *temporal* covenant; that consequently they looked not beyond an earthly possession in the Land of Canaan; and that the doctrine of a future state, if revealed at all, was so faintly revealed under the law, as to make little or no impression on the public mind. This notion has frequently led to a false comparison between the Jewish and Christian dispensations; calculated to prevent a proper judgement being formed of either.

It may seem strange that, with the seventh article of our church before their eyes, which expressly declares "that both in the Old and New Testament, *everlasting life* is offered to mankind by Christ, and consequently that they are not to be heard who feign that the old fathers did look only for *temporal* promises;"—any ministers of the church of England should feel themselves justified in propagating an opinion, which so directly militates against

against their profession. The article considers the opinion under consideration to be a fiction, and as such to be rejected. A fiction, however, as it most certainly is, this opinion has nevertheless received the sanction of some of our most learned divines.

The great Dr. Barrow in his Sermons on the Imperfection of the Jewish Religion, says expressly; that, "as to evident discovery concerning the immortality of man's soul, or the future state (so material a point of religion, of so great moment and influence upon practice), even the Gentile theology (assisted by ancient common tradition) seems to have outgone the Jewish, grounding upon their revealed law; the Pagan priests more expressly taught, more frequently inculcated arguments drawn from thence, than the Hebrew prophets: a plain instance and argument of the imperfection of this religion." And it was upon the principle of the same supposed inferiority of the Jewish to the Pagan religion, so far as respected the knowledge of a future state, that Bishop Warburton (as it has been already observed) grounded his

his paradoxical argument in support of the divine authority of Moses.

We should not be so much surprised to find an opinion, thus supported, generally received, did not the plain language of Scripture speak so decidedly against it. "Search the Scriptures," said our Saviour to the unbelieving Jews, "for in them ye think ye have *eternal life*." On another occasion, to prove the resurrection from the dead, he appeals to the title which God assumed in his address to Moses. "As touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the *dead* but of the *living*." Matt. xxii. 31. In fact, the doctrine of a resurrection was the established doctrine of the Jewish Church. The exception in the case of the Sadducees, who denied a resurrection, proves the establishment of the general doctrine. The Sadducees were Heretics in the Jewish Church. And their heresy consisted in their maintaining a peculiar opinion, in opposition to the acknowledged

knowledged Doctrine of the Church to which they belonged. That a Resurrection from the dead was a settled article of belief in the Jewish Church, there cannot (it should be supposed) remain the least doubt, in the mind of any one tolerably conversant with the Sacred Writings. St. Paul, when he stood before Agrippa, spoke most decidedly on this subject. "I stand (said he) and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers. Unto which promise our Twelve Tribes, instantly, serving God night and day, hope to come: for which hope's sake I am accused." To prove what the promise was, as well as the absurdity of the accusation brought against him, the Apostle immediately subjoins; "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the Dead?"—Acts xxvi. 6. —The promise therefore, to which the Twelve Tribes looked forward in hope, was that of *a Resurrection from the Dead.*

Judaism, it must be observed, was the Type of Christianity. The promise, therefore, relative to the Land of Canaan, must have its spiritual accomplishment,

as well as every other part of the Jewish dispensation. If this were not the case, the person to whom the promise was originally delivered, was certainly deceived by it: for if the reward of his faith and obedience was to consist in the possession of temporal blessings in the Land of Canaan, Abraham never received it.—St. Stephen, speaking of Abraham, says, what every one acquainted with the history of the Patriarch knows to be true; that "God gave him *none* inheritance in Canaan, no, not so much as to set his foot on; yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession."—Acts vii. 5.—The earthly Canaan was therefore the Type or figure of that heavenly country, to which the faithful were taught to look forward for a possession. That they really did so, St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, expressly declares, producing instances through the whole course of the Patriarchal and Jewish dispensation of those faithful worthies, who lived in hope of promises they had never received: looking in eager expectation to their accomplishment in a better country, namely

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an *heavenly*. God having "provided better things" for them, than an earthly Canaan was able to furnish.

That a future state was pointed out to the Jews, under the emblem of Canaan, as the land in which faithful travellers through the wilderness of this world, should ultimately find a rest; is moreover to be demonstrated by St. Paul's mode of arguing on this subject.—The Apostle after having spoken of that *rest* in the Land of Canaan into which those "whose carcases fell in the wilderness, were not permitted to enter because of unbelief;" Heb. iii. 17, &c. thus applies the case to Christians. "Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his *Rest*, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the Gospel preached as well as unto them."—Heb. iv. 1. But what (it may be asked) had Christians to do with the *Rest* in Canaan, taking those words in their *literal* sense? "We, which have believed (says the Apostle) do enter into *Rest*." There is a *Rest* then under the *Christian* dispensation for all true believers. But this *Rest* cannot mean

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that which God is said to have entered into, when he finished the works of Creation; for this had taken place from the foundation of the world. Nor can it mean the Rest of the Israelites in Canaan; for then the Psalmist would not have spoken of it as of a Rest still to be looked forward to, at a time when the Israelites were in actual possession of that promised Land. Psalm xcv.—" Seeing therefore (continues the Apostle) it remaineth, that some must enter into Rest, and they to whom the Gospel was first preached, entered not in because of unbelief;" seeing, moreover, that the promise of this Rest, was limited by David to a certain day, as it is said, " to-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts:"—For if the meaning contained in this prophecy, was completed when Joshua led the Israelites into the Land of Canaan; if he had then given the Rest here spoken of, " then would he not afterward have spoken of another day:" Then follows the conclusion of the Apostle's argument; " There *remaineth therefore a Rest* for the people of God."

A conclusion, which carries with it irresistible

sistible conviction. And what the nature of the Rest under consideration was, the Apostle proceeds to inform us, by comparing it with that Rest which God is said to have entered into when he finished the works of Creation. "For he that is entered into his Rest, he hath also ceased from his own works, as God did from his." The Rest therefore here pointed out, into which the Christian was to labour to enter, was that Rest which was to take place when he had finished his works on earth: of which Rest the Land of Canaan was but the Type or Emblem. For the Patriarchs and holy men under the Jewish dispensation, who were in actual possession of the *literal* Canaan, still looked forward to *a spiritual* Canaan; a Land of Rest eternal in the Heavens; considering themselves as strangers and pilgrims on earth: on which account they are pointed out by the Apostle in a subsequent part of this Epistle, as examples for Christians to follow after.

The moral of the whole doctrine delivered by the Apostle on this subject, (to make use of the words of an excellent inter-

interpreter of Scripture *) being this; that " we should look as they did who went before us, unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our Faith: that seeing Him to be the beginning of our strength, and the end of our hope, we may follow Him through the dangers of life and the terrors of death, to that Rest which remaineth for the people of God."

With such a connected chain of argument on this subject to be met with in the Apostolic Writings, it seems somewhat strange that a position in such direct contradiction to it, which represents the Jews as looking only for temporal rewards under a temporal Covenant, should be maintained by Divines of the Christian Church. But this position, like that respecting natural religion, stands in a great measure on the sandy foundation of a misinterpreted text of Scripture. From the account the Apostle has given of the manifestation of the Grace of God by the appearance of Jesus Christ in the flesh, for the

* Rev. W. Jones. See his excellent " Course of Lectures on the figurative Language of the Holy Scripture."—Lecture 2, on the Hebrews.

purpose

purpose of "abolishing death and bringing life and immortality to light," it has been hastily and generally concluded, that all those who lived previous to Christ's Incarnation, were in a state of blindness with respect to a future state. But if from the above account we are to conclude that the *doctrine* of immortality was first brought to light by Jesus Christ in the flesh; in other words, that He revealed what was not known before; our conclusion will certainly not be warranted by Scripture. The Gospel we are told was preached to Abraham, the Patriarchs, and their successors under the law. By whomsoever the Gospel was understood, to them it brought life and immortality to light. For by the Gospel we understand, glad tidings to fallen man of a restoration to his lost condition. Had not man sinned, death had not entered into the world; man consequently would have been immortal. A restoration therefore to the condition man had lost by the fall, must be a restoration to *life and immortality.*

What the Apostle says then on this subject, refers not to the *doctrine* of immortality

mortality, but to the *event* by which that doctrine was clearly established. Jesus Christ brought life and immortality to light by what *he did*, not by what he *preached*. During his appearing on earth, he actually manifested that grace " which was given us in him before the world began," by abolishing death, and giving us a demonstration of life and immortality, by his resurrection from the grave: φωτισαντος, illuminating, or bringing to the light in his own person, *life and incorruption*.

That the Jews at the time of our Saviour's appearance were become carnally minded, is a point on all hands admitted. From the Babylonish Captivity to the coming of Christ, in consequence of the prevalence of oral tradition, the plain letter of Scripture was in a progressive state of corruption. Still, under such circumstances, the belief of a resurrection was generally received among them. The doctrine was so firmly established, as apparently to bid defiance to the growing corruption. " *I know* (said Martha, speaking of her brother who then lay dead) that he

he shall rise again at the resurrection, at the last day." John xi. 24.—In consequence indeed of that spiritual ignorance which had been suffered to grow on the minds of the Jewish people, their law had, for the most part, become a dead letter. But our Saviour gave the reason for this, when he told the lawyers, that "they had taken away the *key of knowledge*."—Luke xi. 52.

The wisdom of God, in communicating himself to man, has generally thought fit to lock up the precious doctrines of life under the cover of parables and figures: for the unlocking of which, a *key of knowledge* was prepared for the use of the wise and prudent. And there certainly was a time when this key was properly employed.

To form an estimate therefore of the spiritual state of the Jewish nation, at a time when this key of knowledge was confessedly lost among them; is certainly to do great injustice to the dispensation under which they lived: and such misrepresentation tends to disfigure the plan of Divine Providence, by destroying the con-

connection between its several parts. On this supposition, that intervening link in the chain of the divine œconomy of Grace, which was intended to connect the Patriarchal and Christian dispensation, becomes inadequate to the purpose to which it was designed to minister. For if the doctrine of life and immortality, which had been revealed in Paradise and to the Patriarchs, was a doctrine which had no existence under the Jewish law; there appears to be a sort of unintelligible chasm in the great scheme of Redemption, totally irreconcileable with that unity of design, which must characterize the plan of an all-wise Being.

Nevertheless, such has been the system of divinity which has received the sanction of great learning in the Christian Church; and thereby become a sort of standard of direction to those, who have either not possessed the ability or inclination to examine this subject for themselves: a system which, in defiance both of Scripture and reason, represents the Jews, whom Moses describes to be "*a wise and understanding people*," in consequence of their communication

cation with the true God,—Deut. iv.—as more ignorant on the most important of of all subjects, than those nations who confessedly lived "without God in the world."

For this strange misrepresentation we are principally indebted to that great inattention, to the language and spiritual meaning of the Mosaic law, which had long been growing on the Christian world; and which has, at length, tended to render the Scriptures of the Old Testament, in a great degree, unintelligible to the Christian reader; and thereby give advantage to the impugners of the characteristic doctrines of the Cross, by removing out of sight some of the strongest evidence by which they are supported.

To counteract the effects of such fatal inattention, which have been manifested in those various schemes of Religion, which the human imagination has at different times substituted for that of the Bible; it becomes necessary, for the more firm establishment of our faith, that we re-ascend to its original source; and thence follow

follow Revelation in its course, till we are brought, by a regular progression, to its perfect consummation in the character and office of Christ in the flesh.

Such was the object before me, when I entered on the following discourses. In the execution of my projected plan, I have only proved to myself, the truth of an observation of our great moralist; "that no man ever obtains more from his most zealous endeavours, than a painful conviction of his own defects."—Rambler. But as I presume to write only for the use of my younger brethren of the clerical order, I flatter myself, they will condescend to receive from an honest, though unworthy minister of the Christian Church, an endeavour, however imperfectly executed, to re-open to them that field for their professional exertion, which the general insufficiency of modern divinity has, in a great degree, shut up.

For the confutation of Heresy, every thing perhaps has been done, that the collation of different texts of Scripture, fairly interpreted according to the letter, is capable

pable of accomplishing. After that complete specimen * of biblical research and verbal criticism, with which one of the ablest Divines (to whom every sound member of the Church must look up with gratitude) favored the world some years since, and to which every Clerical Student may have recourse in confidence, as to a standard Text Book of his profession; an attempt to add any thing to the perfection of such a species of proof, would at best be superfluous.

But repeated experience has shewn, that no species of verbal proof, however fairly drawn, is capable of establishing a doctrine which the prejudice of the human mind is indisposed to receive. Whilst the plea of erroneous translations, supposed interpolations, and imaginary defects of inspiration is made use of, to get rid of an obvious but offensive interpretation; to hunt heretics out of all their hiding places, and effectually to dislodge them from all their fastnesses, will continue to be, what it ever has been, an hopeless attempt.

* Rev. W. Jones's Catholic Doctrine.

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of divine institution, whenever Providence has favoured them with the opportunity so to do, than to preserve the purity of those doctrines which characterize their profession. What that ecclesiastical polity really is, the most diligent inquiry has left me without a doubt. I thank God for having placed me in a country where that polity is established. On the condition of those to whom Providence has not been pleased to vouchsafe the same blessing, it is not necessary that an opinion should be hazarded. It is sufficient, and it is satisfactory to think, that they are in God's hands: for God, we know, may dispense with his own institutions under whatever circumstances he sees fit: though it must be at man's peril that he at any time assumes to himself the same privilege.

Did I stand in need of additional confirmation on the subject of the Apostolic government of the Church, a late publication could not fail to furnish me with it.

When a writer of distinguished abilities and established character takes a professional subject in hand, we have to expect that the whole strength of the argument will

will be brought forth. In Dr. Campbell's Lectures on Ecclesiastical History, it may therefore be fairly concluded, that every thing has been said in favor of the Presbyterian Establishment, that could be said on the occasion. With submission however to the judgement of the Doctor's surviving friends, I am clearly of opinion, that no addition of credit will be derived to Dr. Campbell's name, by the publication in question. It may, indeed, and it probably will, satisfy those who are prepared to be satisfied with what a Professor in the Scotch Kirk, of great literary reputation, may think fit to say on such a subject; but it will not, I am inclined to think, bring conviction to any one, duly acquainted with the sources from whence knowledge in ecclesiastical matters is to be derived.

In the Doctor's ardent zeal against Episcopacy, which we must take leave to call, in some respects, zeal without adequate knowledge; he has given a picture of the Apostolic Church, which bears as little resemblance to the established Kirk of Scotland, as it does to the primitive Church of Christ. Whilst with an inconsistency, not

easy to be accounted for, he maintains at one time the necessity of what, for the sake of supporting his favorite democratic system, it is his object at other times to disprove; the disproval of which must in its consequences, affect the established order of the Kirk, and that of the Church of England, in an equal degree.

" Nothing, (says the Doctor) can be conceived more absurd in itself, or more contradictory to the declarations of Scripture, than to say that a man's belief and obedience of the Gospel, however genuine the one, and however sincere the other, are of no significancy, unless he has received his information of the Gospel, or been initiated into the Church by a proper Minister. Yet into this absurdity those manifestly run, who make the truth of God's promises depend on circumstantials, in point of order no where referred to, or mentioned in these promises."—P. 86.

It is no uncommon thing for writers to make out a bill of indictment against their supposed opponents, and to proceed to pass judgement upon it, before the charge has been fairly made to bear on the party accused.

accused. How far this may be the case in the present instance, we stop not to enquire; but proceed to observe what from the general tenor of Scripture we are given to understand; that man acquires the ability to believe and obey the Gospel, by the faithful use of certain appointed means of Grace; for in his *natural* condition he is indisposed for either. "How (says the Apostle) shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a Preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent?" Rom. x. 4.—From whence the conclusion is, that some appointed Institution was originally set on foot, and certain Ministers vested with a divine Commission for the purpose of carrying on the design of the Christian Church in the world. Without such an Institution and such a Commission, we have no conception how the affairs of Christ's kingdom, in their ordinary course, could be managed with any probability of success.

How far the promises of God may have been made to depend on the circumstantials of Religion, instituted for the above gracious purpose, it is presumption in us to deter-

determine. But because the circumstantials of Religion are no where precisely marked down in Scripture; to build an argument on that ground which tends to generate a total indifference about them, however it may accord with the unsettled principles of the present day, is certainly totally irreconcileable with that idea, which the general language of Scripture teaches us to form on this important subject.

" Not but that a *certain model of Government* (continues the Doctor) must have been originally adopted for the more effectual preservation of the Evangelical Institution in its native purity; and for the careful transmission of it to after ages."—To this position we readily subscribe; and such being the reason for the original adoption of a *certain model* of government, it is to be presumed, that the Apostles, allowing them to have possessed only the common judgement of uninspired Governors of the Church, could not fail to take some steps for the future establishment of what they deemed so necessary to be adopted.

But in a subsequent page of the Doctor's History, by a conclusion drawn from some unguarded

unguarded expressions of the learned Dodwell; the reader is given to understand, "that nothing was further from the view of the inspired Writers, than to prescribe any rule to us on the subject, or to give us any information which could lead us to imagine, that a particular form of polity was necessary, or even more acceptable to God, than another."— P. 99.

But to say, because no regular system of ecclesiastical government is *totidem verbis* to be found on record in the Apostolic Writings, that therefore the Apostles never meant to prescribe any rule, or give any information on the subject, is surely, if not to argue weakly, at least to beg the question. The presumption in this case is certainly against any such conclusion. The Apostles might not think it necessary at the time to lay down any regular system of ecclesiatical government. Their thoughts were principally engaged, it may be supposed, in establishing the essentials of Christianity. The circumstantials of it they might leave to be regulated by the example of their own ministry. The government of the Church was in their hands; and their office in it was carried

carried on under the immediate direction of the Holy Spirit. Their practice under such circumstances, they might therefore consider, would prove sufficient prescription in this case. And on this head sufficient information is to be met with in their writings, for the direction of all those who are disposed to be directed by it.

That the Apostles were not mistaken in their judgement on this occasion, the settled constitution of the Christian Church, which has preserved a general conformity to the Apostolic model down to the present time, furnishes the most convincing proof.

In page 160, the Professor appears to differ in opinion from the learned *Vitringa*, who has displayed much erudition to prove, that the government of the Christian Church was formed on the model of the Jewish synagogue. "It is not even probable," says Professor Campbell, "that this was the case: their different uses and purposes, suggesting the propriety of many differences in their structure and procedure." At the same time the Professor fails not to leave on the minds of his Disciples, on this subject, an impression more favourable to the

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Presbyterian than *Episcopal* form of government. "On the first erection of the Christian Senate or Council," he says, "they could hardly fail to take as much of the form of the Jewish, as was manifestly of equal convenience in both. It still adds to the probability of this, that in the synagogue, from which many of the terms used in the Church in those early times, were borrowed, he who presided in conducting the worship, and in directing the reading of the Law, was styled the *Angel* of the congregation."

In a subsequent page the Professor seems desirous of confirming that idea in the minds of his Disciples, which represents "the Christian Churches as originally analogous, in point of polity, to the Jewish establishment of Synagogues; by observing that the very names of Church officers were borrowed from the Synagogue."—Page 219.

The reader may know, perhaps, that the argument in favour of Presbyterian Government, from the names of officers in the synagogue having been originally adopted in the Christian Church, has been generally advanced by Presbyterian advocates, and repeat-

repeatedly answered. It is an argument which, at best, has more of plausibily than of substance in it. The Professor himself, though desirous of deriving from it all the advantage that it is capable of furnishing to his cause, does not appear to build upon it with any confidence.—In fact, the great opposition the early establishment of the Christian Church met with, was from the Jewish Priests. An apprehension of the abolition of the law, and the destruction of the Temple was an idea that, at this time, strongly worked on their minds. Whilst the object our Saviour and his Apostles had in view was to introduce the Christian Dispensation into the place of the Jewish; and to make the worshippers in the Temple zealous members of the Christian Church. With this object in view, it might be considered prudent, during the time the Jewish Temple was destined to remain, to abstain from the use of those titles which had a peculiar correspondence with the service of it; lest they might be instrumental in adding fuel to the fire of that Jewish prejudice, which already burnt sufficiently strong against the infant Church. Titles borrowed

rowed from the Sanhedrim, were not so liable to objection

Grotius, who was no very great friend to the Priesthood, observed, in reference to this subject, that it was not without some reason that our Saviour and his Apostles abstained from the use of these supposed obnoxious titles. His words are these, " Ut autem Præcones Novi Testamenti *Sacerdotes* speciatim appellentur, est quidem receptum antiquâ Ecclesiæ consuetudine! sed non *de nihilo est*, quod ab eo loquendi genere, et Christus ipse, et Apostoli semper abstinuerunt." — De imperio Sum. Potest. Cap. ii. 5.

Such an authority had not, it is probable, much weight with a Professor of the Scotch Kirk; who might consider the office of the Priesthood to have terminated with the Jewish Temple. But there is an authority which, it should be supposed, could not have escaped the attention of a Lecturer on Ecclesiastical History; and which cannot fail to have weight on this subject; I mean that of the celebrated historian, Eusebius; who in his book " *De Demonstratione Evangelicâ;*" after having made the following

ing quotation from the Prophet Isaiah, "In that day there shall be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the Land of Egypt:" Isaiah xix. 19.—thus proceeds; "If they had an *altar*, and that they were to sacrifice to Almighty God, πάντως που καὶ ἱερωσύνης ἀξιωθήσονται, they must be thought worthy of a Priesthood also. But the Levitical Priesthood could not be of any use to them, and therefore they must have *another*. Nor was this spoke, (saith he) of the Egyptians only, but of all other nations and idolatrous people, πᾶν γένος τῶν πριν εἰδωλολατρῶν ἀνθρώπων; who now pour forth prayers, not unto many Gods, but to the one and only Lord; and unto him erect an altar for reasonable and unbloody sacrifices, (θυσιαστήριον ἀναίμων καὶ λογικῶν θυσιῶν:) in every place of the whole habitable world, according to the mysteries of the New Testament." What these mysteries were, Eusebius declares fully in the tenth chapter of his first book.—"Christ, (says he) is the *propitiatory* sacrifice for all our sins, since when, even those among the Jews are freed from the curse of Moses' Law; celebrating daily (as they ought) the commemoration of his Body and Blood; which

which is a far more excellent sacrifice and ministry, than any in the former times." He then adds, that " Christ our Saviour offering such a wonderful and excellent sacrifice to his heavenly Father, for the Salvation of us all, appointed us to offer daily unto God the commemoration of the same, (ἀντὶ τῆς θυσίας) *for, and as a sacrifice.* And that whensoever we do celebrate the memorial of that sacrifice on the table, participating of the elements of his Body and Blood, we should say with David ' Thou preparest a table for me in the presence of mine enemies, thou anointedst my head with oil, my cup runneth over.' Wherein he signifieth, most manifestly, the mystical unction, and the reverend sacrifices of Christ's table; where we are taught to offer up unto the Lord, by his own most eminent and glorious Priest, the unbloody, reasonable, and most acceptable sacrifice all our life long."—This he intitles afterward, " The sacrifice of praise, the divine, reverend, and most holy sacrifice, the pure sacrifice of the New Testament.

So we see, that in this *sacrifice* prescribed

scribed to the Christian Church by our Lord and Saviour, there were two proper and distinct actions. The first to celebrate the memorial of our Saviour's Sacrifice, intitled, the commemoration of his Body and Blood once offered, (τοῦ θύματος τὴν μνήμην) the memory of that his sacrifice: (that is as he clearly explains himself) that we should offer this commemoration, ἀντὶ τῆς θυσίας for a sacrifice.—The second, that withal we should offer to him the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, which is the reasonable service of a Christian man, and to him most acceptable. "Therefore (says he) *we sacrifice* Ουκεν και θύομεν, and offer as it were with incense, the memorial of that great sacrifice, celebrating the same according to the mysteries by him given unto us, and giving thanks to him for our salvation; with godly hymns and prayers to the Lord our God; as also offering to Him our whole selves, both soul and body, and to his Priest, which is the Word."

From the above striking picture of the *sacrifice of the Christian altar*, drawn by Eusebius; it appears evident that the Christian

Christian Church was formed on the model of the Jewish Temple; and for the following reason:

The characteristic service of the Jewish Dispensation, which was that of the altar, was performed no where but in the Temple. Now St. Paul says, that "*we Christians have an altar;*" and consequently a *Priesthood* and a *sacrifice;* for these are correlative terms. The above description given by Eusebius of the service of the primitive Church, confirms this idea. The Christian altar then having succeeded to the Jewish, and the Christian Priesthood to the Levitical; it is most reasonable to conclude, that the Christian Church was formed on the model of the Temple, where the altar service was performed; and not on that of the Synagogue, where it certainly was not. But exclusive of the reason of the thing, there is direct proof to be brought forward sufficient to determine this point; part of which the learned Professor has misrepresented, and part he has passed over in silence.

"Some have ascribed (says the Professor) but very unjustly, the origin of the distinction

tion we have been considering, (namely, between the Clergy and Laity) to Clemens Romanus, who, in his Epistle to the Corinthians, which I had formerly an occasion of quoting, contradistinguishes λαικοι (the Laics as we should be apt to render it) from the High Priest, the Priests, and the Levites."

To get rid of the conclusion that was to be drawn from this passage of St. Clemens, relative to the different orders in the Christian Church, the Professor informs his pupils, " it ought to be observed, that it is introduced by him, when speaking of the *Jewish Priesthood*, and not of the *Christian Ministry*."—But it is not *of whom* St. Clemens is speaking, but *to whom* he is addressing himself, that determines the precise meaning of what he says on this occasion. The fact was this, and the Professor, as an Ecclesiastical Historian, ought to have stated it fairly.

When St. Clemens made use of the passage under consideration, he was writing to the divided members of the Church of Corinth, for the express purpose of pressing on them the duty of ecclesiastical subordination

tion and obedience. With this object in view, he made use of the following analogical mode of reasoning. "To the High-Priest (said he) were allotted his proper offices; to the Priests, their proper place was assigned; and to the Levites, their services were appointed: and the Laymen were restrained within the precepts of Laymen." But, it may be asked, what had the members of the Christian Church, to whom St. Clemens was writing, to do with the High Priest, Priests, Levites, and Laymen of the Jewish temple, but *in the way of allusion*. If, then, no distinctions of order had been established in the Christian Church, corresponding with those in the Jewish Temple, the analogical mode of reasoning, here addressed to the Christians at Corinth, had been totally irrelevant; and the allusion, here made use of, incapable of application. What the professor says, that St. Clemens is speaking of the *Jewish Priesthood* and not of the *Christian Ministry*, is therefore not strictly true. St. Clemens, on this occasion, is not speaking of the Jewish Priesthood, as the subject under consideration; but of the Christian Ministry, by an allusion

lusion to the different orders in the Jewish Priesthood; an allusion which must, it is presumed, in the judgement of all impartial persons, go a great way towards establishing that very idea, which the Professor takes every opportunity to discountenance.

But more direct evidence on this subject still remains to be adduced, of which the Professor has not thought proper to take notice.

St. Jerom, in his Epistle to Evagrius, wrote thus:—* "That we may know that the Apostolic Traditions and Institutions are taken from the Old Testament, what *Aaron* and his *sons*, and the *Levites* were in the Temple, that the *Bishops*, the *Presbyters*, and the *Deacons* claim to be in the Church." The Professor having made use of the authority of St. Jerom, it may be concluded, on the supposition that he quoted from the Original, that the above passage from the same authority could not have escaped his observation. On what principle then, it

* Et ut sciamus traditiones Apostolicas sumptas de veteri Testamento: Quod *Aaron* et *filii* ejus atque *Levitæ* in Templo fuerunt, hoc sibi *Episcopi* et *Presbyteri* atque *Diaconi* vendicent in Ecclesiâ.—Jerom. Epist. ad Evagr.

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may be asked, has it been kept back? Did the Professor think that such decisive evidence on the point at issue, might lead his pupils to a conclusion more favorable to the form of the Episcopal Church, than to the Establishment to which they were attached? If so, the reader may be led to think, that the Professor's own observation has in this case been verified in himself; that "when once the controversial spirit has gotten possession of a man, his object is no longer *truth* but *victory*."

That a Professor in the Scotch Kirk should possess a very inadequate idea respecting the Priesthood of the Christian Church, when we consider the origin to which the Scotch Kirk is to be traced up, can be no subject for surprize. That he should therefore, as far as possible, keep the office of the Priesthood out of sight, as an office which, considered in reference to the exercise of it in the Church of England, belonged not, in his opinion, to the Constitution of the Church of Christ, is what was to be expected. The Professor would not have been a faithful member of the Scotch Kirk, had he thought or written

 otherwise.

otherwise. But the method which the Professor has taken, for the purpose of impressing the same idea of the Christian Priesthood on the minds of his disciples, which appears to have taken possession of his own, is not what was to have been expected from a person of Dr. Campbell's character and abilities.

What the Professor has said on the subject of the Priesthood, as applied to our Saviour, will readily be admitted. But because our Saviour is, in the strictest sense, our *only Priest*, he *alone* having offered up the *true propitiatory sacrifice* for man; does it thence follow, that the office of the Priesthood was never exercised by any other person? Such a concession operates with no less strength against the *Levitical*, than against the *Christian* Priesthood; and consequently the Professor's argument in this case, applies with equal propriety to the Jewish as to the Christian Dispensation; the Priesthood under both being equally *representative*. Whilst the argument which the Professor has built on the allegorical style adopted in Scripture, " wherein Christians are represented as Priests, and

the

the whole community as an holy Priesthood," to prove that the office of Priesthood, under the Evangelical Dispensation, does not *exclusively* belong to any particular order of men, appears to be just as convincing; as would be an argument, to prove the abolition of the exclusive office of *Kings*, (all members of the Christian Church being *Kings* as well as *Priests*,) grounded on that allegorical language of the Apostle; when speaking of Jesus Christ, he says, that " he hath made us *Kings* and *Priests* unto God and his Father."—Rev. i. 5.

To give additional strength however to the ground he has here taken, the Professor brings forward the authority of Justin Martyr. The authority of the early Fathers, if fully and fairly deduced, would be most decisive against the Professor. His appeal to them therefore we are not surprized to find very limited. And even in the appeal he occasionally does make, limited as it is, he sometimes mutilates the evidence, and thereby misrepresents the meaning of its author.

On the present occasion, the Professor quotes

quotes Justin Martyr in his Dialogue with Trypho, " after mentioning Christ as our all-sufficient High Priest, as insisting, that in consequence of our Christian Vocation, we, his Disciples, *not the Pastors exclusively*, are God's true sacerdotal family." Page 312.

When we wish to ascertain the opinion of an author on any given subject, we seek it, it is presumed, not in an accidental allegorical expression that may occur in his writings, but in those plain and repeated passages, which speak decidedly to the point under consideration; if any such are to be found. Let the Apologist's opinion on the subject before us be fairly ascertained by this rule of judgement, and the Professor shall be at full liberty to make the most of his authority.

Justin Martyr, in his first apology, after having related our Saviour's institution of the Sacrament of His Supper, when he commanded his Apostles to take Bread, and having given thanks, to say, " This is my Body," &c. and likewise the Cup, saying, " This is my Blood," &c. observes to the Gentiles, that the wicked Dæmons had

had, by way of imitation, commanded the same to be done in the Sacraments of *Mithra*. "For, (saith he) you either know, or may know for certain, that a loaf and a cup of water, with a form of words, was used in the solemn sacrifices for him, who was initiated in that Religion;" meaning, as he had shewn, that the holy Eucharist was administered immediately on the baptism, or initiation of men into the Christian Religion: his parallel therefore between the two mysteries, and initiation implies; that the Eucharistical Bread and Wine was * τελετὴ, a solemn material sacrifice in the opinion of Christians, as the other diabolical Bread and Water was in the mysteries of Mithra; and consequently that the Ministers of Baptism and the holy Eucharist in the Christian Church, were as *proper Priests*, as the Priests of Mithra, or the Sun, were by his worshippers esteemed to be.

To the same subject of the Christian Priesthood, Justin Martyr speaks thus

* Suidas. ΤΕΛΕΤΗ. Θυσια μυστηριώδης, ἡ μεγίστη, καὶ τιμιωτάτη. —Sacrificium Mysteriorum, plenum, maximum, honoratissimum.

plainly

plainly in his Dialogue with Trypho the Jew.—Page 259.—" The meat offering of fine flour, which was appointed to *be offered* for those who were cleansed from the leprosy, was a Type of the Eucharistical Bread, which Jesus Christ our Lord commanded to *be offered* in remembrance of his Passion; which he suffered for those, whose souls are purged from all sins; &c. and therefore God by Malachi, who was one of the Twelve Prophets, speaks of the sacrifices which you then offered, thus: " I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of Hosts, neither will I accept an offering at your hands; for from the rising of the sun, unto the going down of the same, my Name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in *every place* incense shall be offered unto my Name; and a pure offering; for my Name shall be great among the Heathens, saith the Lord, but you have profaned it. But of the *sacrifice of the Gentiles* offered up by us in every place, that is to say, of the Bread of the Eucharist, and Cup of the Eucharist, he then spoke before-hand, saying, that we glorified his Name, but you profaned it:"—Plainly signifying, that the sacrifice

sacrifice of the Jewish Temple should cease, and the pure sacrifice of the Christian altar be introduced in its place; and, consequently, that the priests under the *Evangelical* as under the *Jewish* dispensation, had an office appropriated to them. "Our Saviour, and all priests from him, (says Eusebius, h. p. 16. Ap. l. 6.) celebrate *a spiritual sacrifice* in bread and wine."

From these premisses it appears, that the Professor would give his Disciples to understand, on the authority of a single allegorical expression from Justin Martyr, that the general opinion of the earliest Fathers was favourable to the conclusion he had drawn, respecting the non-existence of the Priesthood, as a peculiar office under the Evangelical Dispensation; at the same time that there are plain and circumstantial passages to be produced from the *same writer*, which necessarily lead the reader to the direct opposite conclusion.

By Divines of the Scotch Kirk, in whose scale of judgement the authority of their learned Professor may weigh heavy, his mode of reasoning on this occasion may be

be taken on trust, and considered as sterling. But Divines of the Church of England will, I trust, examine this subject for themselves: and when they do, they will be convinced that their opinion of the sentiments of the early Fathers of the Church is not to be taken from the pages of Dr. Campbell's Ecclesiastical History: and perhaps they may moreover conclude, that the cause must in itself be very weak, for the support of which an able advocate condescends to employ such inconclusive argument.

Had the Professor discarded all evidence that was to be drawn from the early Fathers of the Church, we should only have said, that he had a right to place his subject on what ground he thought proper. But if he does appeal to their authority, we have a right to require, that these Fathers should be allowed to speak fairly for themselves.

There is still one observation on the Doctor's work which I feel much disinclined to make: it respects the supercilious contempt with which the Doctor, generally speaking, appears to treat those who entertain opinions different from his own. This

This is conduct which must disgrace the best of causes, and can add strength to none. Harsh and illiberal epithets (see p. 90) applied to opponents, if they were in character, considered as proceeding from a *Professor ex Cathedrâ*, certainly do not become the scholar, much less the Divine. And, how high soever Dr. Campbell may be thought to stand in either or both those characters, yet for him to have spoken with proper respect of men of such profound erudition and distinguished excellence, as *Dodwell* and *Hickes*, however mistaken they might be, would certainly not have diminished in the least his own reputation in the world.

With the view however of exposing what is called the "*inconsequential* reasoning" of Dr. Hickes, Professor Campbell has furnished his reader with an opportunity of weighing his own knowledge of the Jewish Scriptures, and that of Dr. Hickes against each other.

Dr. Hickes (in his first Letter on the Christian Priesthood, C. 3.) says, "that our Lord, as *a Jew*, was to observe the Law and the Temple worship, and live in communion

munion with the Jews: which, though he could do as a King and a Prophet, yet he could not do with *congruity*, had he declared himself to be their Sovereign Pontiff; that very High Priest, of which Aaron himself was but a Type and Shadow.—But allow me to ask (continues the Professor) why could he not? Was it because there was a real incongruity betwixt his conforming to the Jewish worship, and his character of High Priest? If there was, he acted incongruously, for he did conform: and all he attained by not declaring himself a Priest, was not to avoid, but to dissemble this incongruity. And if there was none in conforming, where was the incongruity in avowing a conduct, which was in itself congruous and defensible? We are therefore forced to conclude, from this passage, either that our Lord acted incongruously, and was forced to recur to dissimulation to conceal it, or that Dr. Hickes argues very *inconsequentially*."—Page 313.

Such is the mode of reasoning adopted by the Professor, with the view of vindicating our Saviour's Character, from that charge of *political dissimulation* which appears

pears, in his opinion, to have been *inadvertently* ascribed to it on this occasion by Dr. Hickes.

Might I presume to hold the balance between these two learned men, I should observe, what, from a due attention to the argument on both sides, appears to me to be the case: that the Professor has certainly commenced his attack on Dr. Hickes's position, by a palpable misinterpretation of it; and on that misinterpretation has built his conclusion.

The Professor supposes the incongruity in this case, according to Dr. Hickes's position, to consist in our Saviour's conformity to the Jewish worship, and his character of High Priest; and on this supposition proceeds to say, that our Saviour acted incongruously, for he did conform. But the incongruity alluded to by Dr. Hickes, would have consisted, not in our Saviour's conformity to the Temple worship, and his character of High Priest under the Gospel, for in this there was nothing incongruous; but in our Saviour's observing the Law and Temple worship *as a Jew*, and his assuming to himself the office

office of High Priest *under that Dispensation.* We are not therefore forced to conclude with the Professor from this passage from Dr. Hickes, either " that our Saviour acted incongruously, and was forced to recur to dissimulation to conceal it, or that Dr. Hickes argues inconsequentially;" because our Saviour was not chargeable with the incongruity to which Dr. Hickes alluded: he observed the Law and Temple worship *as a Jew;* but never assumed the office of High Priest *under the Law:* there was therefore no occasion for our Saviour (if we may so say) to use dissimulation for the concealment of a character, to which he made nô pretensions. Our Saviour being born under the Law, was to observe the Law. This he could do as a *King* or a *Prophet;* but in assuming the office of Sovereign Pontiff, he would have broken the Law; for he belonged to the Tribe of Judah, not to the Tribe of Levi, to which the office of Priesthood *exclusively* appertained. The difference between a man's conforming to an established worship, and acting as an officiating Minister in it, must, it is presumed, be sufficiently apparent.

The

The fallacy of Dr. Campbell's argument against Dr. Hickes appears to consist then in its confounding, what it was the intention of Dr. Hickes to *discriminate;* namely, the congruity of our Saviour's conduct in observing the Temple worship *as a Jew,* with what would have been the incongruity of it, had he officiated in it *as a Priest.* There was no incongruity in the former case; in the latter there certainly would have been; and for the following obvious reason:

The Jewish Dispensation was Typical of the Christian. The High Priest of the Law was the Type of Christ, the great High Priest of the Gospel. It would therefore have been a confusion of the divine œconomy of Grace, for the Type and Anti-type to have been made to *co-exist* under the same Dispensation. St. Paul gives the reason why our Saviour should not have been a Priest under the Law.— "If he were on earth (says the Apostle) he should *not be a Priest;* seeing that there are Priests that offer gifts according to the Law." Heb. viii. 4. Our Saviour's Priesthood was to be exercised not on earth but in

in heaven. It was a Priesthood not after the order of Aaron, but after the order of Melchisedeck: a Priesthood "made not after the Law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another Tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar." Heb. vii. 13.

Having thus stated the case, and I trust fairly, between these two learned men, the decision shall be left with the reader.

To follow the Professor, step by step, through the Course of his Lectures, were I either disposed, or at leisure for the undertaking, would lead too far astray from the work immediately before me. My object has been to make those occasional remarks on the performance in question, which might operate, by way of caution, on the minds of those who might otherwise be led to pay too implicit a deference to the acknowledged abilities of its author.

It is not to be supposed, that a person in Dr. Campbell's station could really mean to lessen the respect due to established institutions;

institutions; or give countenance to those prevailing opinions which are subversive of all order and government in the Church whatever. Passages however, and not a few, are to be found in his Lectures, which may operate in such a way. I will detain the reader only, while I point out one to his attention. In page 90, we are told, in unqualified language and of universal application, "that the terms of the Gospel are not in the Sacred Pages connected with, or made to depend on either the Minister, or the form of Ministry."—The question is not, whether the above words may not admit of a certain *qualified* sense, in which we are ready to receive them; but whether, in the heads of indiscriminating persons, they do not obviously lead to the following dangerous conclusion; that those, to whom our Saviour delivered the evangelical commission, did not thereby acquire any particular authority; and that the form of Baptism instituted by our Saviour, was not more valid than any other form that might be adopted for the purpose. The government of the Church was therefore left as it were ad *arbitrium vulgi*. Every man might

might take on himself the office of a Minister, and any form of Ministry be adopted with equal prospect of securing the terms of the Christian Covenant. This is indeed an extensive principle; for it justifies all sects, and supersedes all institutions and sacraments whatever *.

But

* An ingenious and very eminent Dignitary of our own Church, has not hesitated to carry this dangerous notion to a still more dangerous extreme; by maintaining, that the Doctrines of the Church, "in consequence of the changes which are wont to take place in the judgement of mankind," are not less subservient to the varying opinions and circumstances of the world, than the Constitution of it: thereby furnishing a proof of what we fear will be found too true; namely, that a laxity of opinion relative to the Constitution of the Church, is often accompanied with an equal degree of laxity with respect to its Doctrines. For, on the hasty assumption that many Injunctions were addressed to, and imposed on the Apostles and first Disciples, which are not obligatory on Christians in after-times, Dr. Paley has classed one of the fundamental Articles of our Faith, among the Doctrines of temporary duration. In a Sermon preached at a Visitation of the late Lord Bishop of Carlisle, on July 15, 1777, Dr. Paley writes thus; and we do not perceive from any subsequent publication, that he has altered his opinion: "If any one asks, what the expressions in Scripture, *Regenerate,—Born of the Spirit,—New Creatures*, mean?—We answer; that, they

But on this principle it may be asked, with what propriety does St. Paul call on the members of the Church " to obey them that had the rule over them, and to submit themselves?" Or with what propriety does Dr. Campbell find fault with the founders of new sects, by which he probably means the modern Seceders from the Scotch Establishment? For if no authority in Church matters is lodged any where, and all forms of Ministry are equally effectual and equally acceptable; sects of every denomination have an equal right to plead private opinion, as a full justification for their practice, however eccentric: and consequently it remains to be proved,

they mean nothing! nothing to us!—nothing to be found, or sought for, in the present circumstances of Christianity."—Such an opinion, however confidently delivered, no authority of Genius, Learning, or Station can possibly establish. For, as we understand it, it is the heretical opinion of an individual, against the decision of the Church, and the language of the Bible. We have only to hope therefore, for the sake of the rising Generation, that where Dr. Paley's Writings shall be considered as a Study proper to form the mind of the young Academician; they will not fail to be accompanied with a Comment necessary to counteract the apparently unscritural, as well as unconstitutional notions of their Author.

in what sense those *unchristian* separations, of which the Doctor himself complains, (Page 108,) can be said to exist.

These are some few of the remarks which presented themselves on a general view of the Professor's publication. But as a considerable part of that publication is pointedly directed against the Episcopal Establishment of the Church in this country, it may be expected from a Minister of that Establishment, that he should bring forward something decided on that head.

Considering however that this subject has, been so frequently and completely handled, as to render a particular analysis of it unnecessary; it will be my object, to bring what I may have to say upon it within the shortest possible compass; by laying hold of what Lesley significantly calls the *jugulum causæ;* with the view of strangling the subject as it were in its birth. A multiplicity of words and arguments, by confounding and amusing the understanding, ofttimes tends more to obscure the truth, than to illustrate it. The heart of a cause lies (generally speaking) in one point: by a judicious exposition of which,

which, judgement on the case is brought to a speedy issue.

When a writer builds on a false foundation, it is not necessary to waste time in pulling down his superstructure, stone by stone; the shortest method will be to draw away the foundation; in which case the building, be it carried ever so high, becomes at once an heap of rubbish on the ground.

The point which Professor Campbell has most laboured to establish, and which constitutes the foundation on which, in common with other Advocates in the same cause, he has erected his superstructure of Presbyterian Parity, is, that one Bishop was invariably considered, in the most ancient usage, as having only *one Church*, or *Congregation* of Christian people: from whence says the Professor, " it is manifest that his inspection at first was only over *one Parish.*" Page 206. The word εκκλησια, Church, in the opinion of the Professor, having " but two original senses in the New Testament; the one denoting only a single congregation of Christians: the other the whole Christian Community."—

When

When therefore we find nothing in the expression, or in the scope of the passage to determine us to limit the Church to any particular district, as when Christ says, " on this rock will I build my Church;"— we are to understand of course not any particular Church, but the Catholic Church wheresoever dispersed: but when on the contrary we read of the Church of God at Corinth, or in any other given place, we are then to understand only one single congregation of assembled Christians.

The latter of these two positions is the only one with which we are at present concerned. And as the Professor appears to write on this subject, as if he thought himself standing on high ground, from whence he might look down with contempt on all who dissented from him; I shall proceed to examine this position with some degree of attention. And though I shall not address to Dr. Campbell that coarse and illiberal language which he has thought proper to apply to the learned Dodwell, where he calls his positions on the subject of Episcopacy " extravagancies, more like the ravings of a disordered brain, than the sober

sober deductions of a mind capable of reflection;" P. 188—yet I shall not hesitate to say, with the view of guarding my younger Brethren against the prevalence of the present latitudinarian principles; that the independent notions contained in Dr. Campbell's late publication, are those which have already been productive of infinite mischief to the cause of Christianity; and if not timely counteracted, bid fair to terminate in its total destruction. And if Dr. Campbell, with all his acknowledged abilities, had not been a blind worshipper of his favorite idol, *Presbyterianism*, he could not have acquiesced in a system of Church government, "to which all the sources of evidence hitherto known in theological controversy, reason, Scripture, and tradition, (if fairly produced) are equally repugnant."

But before I proceed to the examination of particulars, it may be observed that the fundamental position on which the Professor's argument against Episcopacy is built, namely, that a primitive Bishop was a Minister only of a *single parish*; the proofs of which are now attempted to be drawn from the state of the Church in the first ages;

ages; was never heard of till many years after the separation from the Church of Rome had taken place. Had those foreign Reformers, who, when they separated from the Roman Church, unfortunately neglected to take the steps necessary to retain Episcopacy among them, entertained any such idea on the subject, they certainly would not have kept it out of sight; much less would they have spoken decidedly in favor of the Episcopacy of the Church of England, and condemned unequivocally as they did all separations from it. The words of Beza on this occasion are remarkably strong*. "If there are any, (says he) which you can hardly make me believe, who reject the whole order of Bishops, God forbid that any man in his sound reason should consent to their madness." And speaking of the Hierarchy of

* Si qui sunt autem (quod sane mihi non facile persuaseris) qui omnem Episcoporum ordinem rejiciunt, absit ut quisquam satis sanæ mentis furoribus illorum assentiatur."

"Fruatur sane istâ singulari Dei beneficentiâ, quæ utinam sit illi perpetua."—Beza ad Tract. de Minist. Ev. Grad. Belgæ Edit. C. 1 et 18.

the

the Church of England, he says, *" Let her enjoy that singular blessing of God, which I wish she may ever retain." And Calvin, if he is to be judged by his writings, must have thought the cause in which Dr. Campbell has engaged, more worthy of an anathema than of vindication. " If (says he, speaking in opposition to the Popish Hierarchy) they would give us an Hierarchy in which the Bishops were so eminent, as that they would not refuse to be subject to Christ, and depend on him as their only head, and be referred to him; —then I confess them worthy of all anathemas, if there shall be any such, that would not reverence such an Hierarchy, and submit to it with the utmost obedience." Such an Hierarchy Calvin acknowledged that of the Church of England to be.

In fact, the Reformation, in the original

* " Talem si nobis Hierarchiam exhibeant, in quâ sic emineant Episcopi, ut Christo subesse non recusent, et ab illo tanquam unico capite pendeant, et ad ipsum referantur;—tum vero nullo non anathemate dignos fatear, si qui erunt qui non eam revereantur, summâque obedientiâ observent."—De Necess. Eccl. Refor.

and

and proper sense of the word, did not consist in a separation from Episcopacy as such; for that was not the point at issue; but in a separation from the corruptions which the Papal Usurpation had grafted upon it. It was a separation grounded upon gross and notorious facts, imcompatible with the doctrine and spirit of Christianity, not on mere speculative opinions. In the enjoyment of this separation, with an Episcopacy independant of the Pope, the Church of England, continued for some years, when there was no such being as a Presbyterian in the nation. The arguments which have been since employed in support of Presbyterianism, derive their origin chiefly from that spurious spirit of Puritanism, which, having first manifested itself in a factious, and for the most part senseless opposition to the order and discipline of the Church of England, at length terminated in that fatal separation from it, which Separatists feel themselves pledged at all events to justify.

Such discrimination is necessary to distinguish the glorious cause of our Reformation,

mation, from that degenerate one, which Presbyterianism is at all times vainly attempting to associate with it.

The turbulent Cartwright in Queen Elizabeth's days, was the first who wrote a book to prove the very position, that has occupied so many pages of Dr. Campbell's History, namely, that primitive Churches with their Bishops, were *Parishes only;* and that each city contained but one parochial congregation.—A full and learned answer to this book, which soon followed its publication, laid this controversy to rest for about a century. It was then revived, and considered as a new discovery by one Clarkson, under the bold title of " No Scripture Evidence for Diocesan Bishops;"—which speedily drew after it a compleat answer from Dr. *Maurice*, in his admirable defence of Diocesan Episcopacy, which again laid the subject to rest for some time. This same subject thus (if we may so say) repeatedly nonsuited, was again brought to trial about the beginning of the last century under the title of " An Enquiry into the Constitution, Discipline, Unity, and Worship, of the Primitive

Primitive Church, within the first three hundred years after Christ."—Having attended to the progress of this controversy, and particularly marked the ground on which from time to time it has been placed; I have no difficulty in tracing the road in which the Professor has travelled; and there is little doubt on my mind that the publication last mentioned was the one which the Professor had before him, when he put together that part of his Lectures, which is now more immediately under consideration: because the same arrangement of argument and proof; the same mutilation of extract; the same want of appeal to that evidence which the Scriptures are competent to furnish, together with the same turn of expression, are to be met with in the publications of both writers; a circumstance not to be accounted for but on the supposition of one having copied from the other. Indeed the chief marks by which the publication of the Professor appears to be distinguished from that of most other advocates in the same cause, are that unqualified boldness of assertion and peremptoriness of decision, which certainly

tainly prove, not so much the truth of a cause, as the confidence of its supporter.

Now if Dr. Campbell did not know that the publication above-mentioned, entitled "An Enquiry into the Constitution of the Primitive Church," &c. from which it is here presumed, that he closely copied; had been so completely answered by the author of "*An Original Draught of the Primitive Church;*" as to bring over the Enquirer to that author's opinion; he was certainly not fully qualified to read Lectures on Ecclesiastical History; because, having taken but a partial view of the point on which the government of the Christian Church is supposed to turn, his History of Church matters must be considered rather as the History of his own prejudices, than a detail of authenticated facts. On the other hand, if the Doctor had made himself acquainted with the answers which have been repeatedly given to the positions he has so confidently produced; which, in such case he must have known, completely overturned the foundation on which he builds, on this occasion; by withholding information so necessary

sary to qualify his pupils to form an impartial judgement on the subject before them, he was acting that disingenuous part, which is not to be reconciled with the character of an honest man. Indeed it should seem, (and we are very sorry that such an imputation should even appear to lie against Dr. Campbell) that the Professor, having long since made up his own mind to the Presbyterian Standard, determined either not to meet this subject fairly; or having privately met it, thought it most adviseable in his public Lectures to pass over such a circumstance unnoticed. According to which plan of proceeding, controversy must be endless: we have but to adopt the motto of pride and self-sufficiency, "Non persuadebis, etiamsi persuaseris," and we may dispute the ground without an inch being gained on either side from generation to generation.

The Professor's advice to his Pupils, (Page 166,) is confessedly, that of a wise and candid man;—"Revere truth (says he) above all things, wherever ye find it. Attend coolly and candidly to the voice of reason, from what quarter soever it comes.

comes. Let not the avenues of your understanding be choaked up with prejudices and prepossessions, but be always open to conviction." Had this excellent advice possessed sufficient influence on the mind of the Professor, persuaded I am, that both the premisses and conclusions which he has adapted to the support of the point in question, are what the discriminating judgement of Dr. Campbell must have rejected with scorn.

But as the reader has a right to expect more than declamation on such a subject, I shall proceed to lay before him the foundation on which the Doctor has thought fit to build on this occasion; with the view of examining briefly the solidity of the materials of which it is composed.

The foundation, which Dr. Campbell considers to have been so firmly laid in the primitive days of the Church as not to be shaken, is, that the charge of one Bishop was originally confined to one congregation: the word Church being only used in Sacred Writ in two senses, either as applicable to one congregation: or to the whole community of Christians; " the plural

plural number, *Churches*, being invariably used, when more congregations than one are spoken of, unless the subject be of the whole commonwealth of Christ." Page 205. Hence it follows, in the Doctor's words, that " the Bishop's inspection was at first only *over one* Parish."—" Accordingly the territory to which the Bishop's charge extended, was always named in the period I am speaking of, in Greek, παροικια; in Latin, *Parochia;* or rather *Paræcia*; which answers to the English word *Parish*; and means properly a neighbourhood." Page 206. Of the meaning of the English word *Parish*, there can be at this time no room for doubt; but before this part of the Doctor's foundation can stand firm, it must be proved that the word παροικια at the period of which the Doctor was speaking, and the English word *Parish*, in its modern acceptation, mean the same thing: otherwise we may be taking sound for sense.

This is a point the Doctor also thinks necessary to be established: and for this reason he appeals to the authority of Stephanus, a lexicographer; observing at the same

same time, that in the first application of a name to a particular purpose, a strict regard is commonly paid to *etymology*. By which (if I mistake not the Doctor's meaning,) he would give his reader to understand, that in the application of the word παροικια to a Bishop's charge in the Primitive Church, particular regard was paid to its *original* derivation.

The exposition of the word by Stephanus, is, it must be admitted, exactly suited to the Doctor's hypothesis. But as the object in view is to ascertain the meaning of the word in question, at the period of which the Doctor was speaking, the signification of it ought to have been traced from that period: in which case it would have been found that the *original* meaning of the word and Stephanus's exposition of it differed so widely from each other, as to militate against, rather than support, the conclusion which Dr. Campbell has drawn from it. To suppose that the application of the word παροικια to a Primitive Bishop's charge had any respect to the language now in use among us of this nation, is an opinion too absurd to be admitted

admitted by any thinking man; whatever affinity there may be between the ancient word and the modern one (should any continue to exist) must be derived, not from any reference which the original word could have to the *future* application of it; but from a conformity of *modern* usage with its *original* interpretation. This conformity must then be first ascertained, before any conclusive argument can be built upon it.

Now the true method by which to ascertain the meaning of a Primitive Ecclesiastical word, is by the sense it bears in Holy Scripture, if to be found there: by the continued use of it in the Primitive Church, and by the common signification of it in the original language from whence it is taken. Let the word παροικια be tried by these touchstones, and it will be found that Dr. Campbell's cause has no claim to its assistance.

To begin with the Holy Scripture, St. Luke uses the word in his Gospel for a *stranger*. "Art thou only a *stranger* in Jerusalem."—Συ μονος παροικεις, &c.—St. Paul uses the word in the same sense. Eph. ii. 19. "You

" You are no longer strangers and *foreigners*, &c. παροικοι; in which passage the words *strangers* and *foreigners* are used in opposition to " fellow citizens of the saints and of the household of God."—From whence it appears, that the word παροικια must have suggested to the minds of the primitive Christians, an idea very different from that which Dr. Campbell, on the authority of Stephanus, has annexed to to it.

If from the touchstone of Sacred Writ, we proceed to try the word in question by that of the primitive writers of the Church; the word παροικια both in Greek and Latin writers for several ages, is to be met with denoting a diocese of many Parishes and congregations in it: which plainly proves that the narrow notion which modern usage has affixed to the English word *Parish*, did not *originally* belong to it. For the establishment of this point one or two instances may be sufficient. St. Jerom, * translating an Epistle of Epiphanius, to John, Bishop of Jerusalem, ex-

* Epiphan. Epist. ad Joannem Hyerosol. inter opera Hyeron. Vol. ii. Tom. 3. Fol. 71.

presses both their large dioceses by the word *Parochia* only. St. Augustin * in his Epistle to Pope Cœlestin tells him, that the Town of Fussala, 40 miles distant from Hippo, with the country round about it did, before his time, belong to the *Parœchia* of his Church of Hippo. And our own countryman, the venerable Bede, calls the diocese of Winchester by the same name, even when the whole Province of the South Saxons did belong to it. "Provincia Australium Saxonum ad Civitatis Ventanæ *Parochiam* pertinebat."—Bede, Eccl. Hist. l. y. c. 19.

From the testimony borne to this word by the primitive writers of the Church, we pass on to its signification in the original language from which it is taken.

On appeal to the inquisitive *Suicer* we find the word παροικεω rendered by the Latin, *advena* or *peregrinus* sum; in conformity with the meaning annexed to it by the inspired Penmen, as above remarked; and the word καλουκειν opposed to it; which (he says) according to ancient glosses,

* August. Opera a Theol. Lovan. Edit. Colon. Agrip. 1616. Tom. ii. p. 325.

signifies

signifies to *dwell*, or *have an habitation in any place*. Which interpretation of the word, in direct opposition to the meaning annexed to it on this occasion by the learned Professor, *Suicer* has confirmed by the authority of Philo Judæus, Basil, and Theodoret.

With an appearance of candor, the Professor indeed tells his pupils, that he would not have it imagined that "he laid too great a stress on the import of words, whose significations in time come insensibly to alter." P. 206. At the same time he does the very thing which he would not be thought to do; for in almost the next sentence, without taking the least notice of the alteration that the insensible lapse of time has introduced into the use of the original word in question, he proceeds to determine the judgement of his pupils on this subject, by informing them in decided language, that the word "παροικια can be applied no otherwise, when it relates to place, than the word *Parish* is with us at *this day*."—P. 207.

Thus much for that part of the Professor's foundation, which has been laid on the

the interpretation annexed by him to the word παραπια; which appears to be in direct contradiction to the original sense of it; as that sense is capable of being ascertained by the language of the sacred Penmen, the primitive writers of the Church, and the common signification of the word in the language to which it belongs: sources of information to which the Professor on this occasion ought certainly to have had recourse.

That part of the Professor's foundation which he has raised on the three words επι το αυτο, will not be found to have more *solidity* in it, than the part already examined. The conclusion drawn by the Professor from the expression επι το αυτο is, that the whole flock with their Bishop assembled together in *the same place*; consequently that there could be but *one* congregation in *one city*. This the Professor observes is evident from the writings of Justin Martyr, of Irenæus, of Tertullian, of Cyprian, and several others.

Admitting that the expression in question was meant to convey the precise meaning annexed to it on this occasion, the Professor's

fessor's foundation, so far as this expression is concerned, appears to stand firm. But to disprove this point, it will be sufficient to examine the authority only of one of the writers, to whom the appeal is here made.

Justin Martyr, for instance, makes use of the expression in his apology to the Heathen Emperor for the then persecuted Christians. "For brevity's sake (the Professor says) he does not produce the passage at length."—But the passage must strike the reader as too short in itself, to require an abbreviation. It will be more for the credit of the Professor's character, therefore, to suppose him implicitly adopting the observation heretofore made by the *Enquirer into the "Constitution of the Primitive Church"* on this passage; because that author's conclusion from it was built on a similar mutilation of the Martyr's text; than to suppose the Professor arguing from an appeal to the writings themselves: because such appeal, to a person of Dr. Campbell's judgement, must have determined the passage to be totally inapplicable to the point it is brought to prove.

The

The Apologist was writing to the heathen emperor in vindication of the persecuted Christians throughout the Roman empire; and towards the close of his apology he sets forth the general method they adopted in the performance of their religious service. His apology being general for the whole body of Christians every where dispersed throughout the empire; the practice which he described must consequently have the same general application. His description was contained in the following words; "πανίων κατὰ πόλεις ἡ ἀγρὸς μενονίων επι το αυτο συνελευσις γινεται." All throughout cities and countries assemble together in *one place*; admitting such to be the proper translation of the passage. These words, in the sense of the Apologist, undeniably contained a description of the Christian practice throughout the Roman empire: that on Sundays, all Christians both in cities and countries assembled together, for the purpose of public worship. A description, which equally applies to the practice of the Christian Church at this time in this country. But if these words prove any thing, to the establishment of the position

sition the Professor lays down, namely, that the whole flock assembled together with their Bishop and Presbyters in *the same place*; from which premisses, the conclusion is meant to be drawn, that a Bishop's charge did not originally extend beyond a single congregation; they certainly prove too much: for in such case they prove, that all the Christians, dispersed throughout the wide extent of the Roman empire, assembled together *in one place* on days of public worship, and made but *one congregation*. To put the glaring absurdity of such a conclusion out of sight, the *Enquirer* into "the Constitution of the Primitive Church" has prudently omitted the words "πανίων κατὰ πόλεις ἢ ἀγρὸς μενόντων," which determine the application of the passage to the general practice of Christians throughout the Roman empire; with the view of accommodating it to the particular case he had to establish, relative to the confined nature of the Bishop's charge; thereby affixing a sense to the words of the Apologist, totally different from that which the Apologist himself designed them to convey. And in this notorious misrepresen-

sentation

tation of Justin Martyr's meaning, Professor Campbell appears to have followed the Enquirer's example.

But the Professor should moreover have known, that the propriety of the translation, on which his argument in this case is built, is at least of a very questionable kind.

The learned Grotius translates this same phrase, επι το αυτο, Acts iii. 1,—"circa idem tempus, about the same time."—Beza's Paraphrase on the same phrase occurring in Acts ii. 44. is this: "The common assemblies of the Church, with their mutual agreement in the same doctrine, and the great unanimity of their hearts were signified by it."—"All that believed, (says Dr. Wells in his Paraphrase on the same passage,) were wont to assemble together in the several places where they lived, to perform divine worship."

In the Greek translation of Ps. xxxiv. 3. what the Septuagint render επι το αυτο, Aquila translates Ομοθυμαδον, that is, "with one mind and one heart."—The same phrase is to be met with again in Acts iv. 26. where it is said of the kings of the earth and of

the

the rulers, that they were gathered together; "συνηχθησαν επι το αυτο."—But the word συνηχθησαν justifies the above translation, without the addition of επι το αυτο. By the addition therefore of that phrase in this place, may be understood, that they were met together, not *in the same place*, but *with the same mind*, or for the same purpose. The whole passage then taken together would have been more fully and significantly rendered thus;—"The kings of the earth and the rulers *conspired together*;" &c. —for it is not to be supposed, that the kings of the earth and the rulers, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were met together in *one* assembly on this occasion. Nor can this phrase, in the use Justin Martyr made of it, as it has been above observed, be understood in the sense annexed to it by the Professor, without a similar absurdity of bringing all Christians throughout the cities and countries of the Roman empire together on holy days, for the purpose of public worship.

How conclusive the argument must be, which proceeds on the arbitrary interpretation of a *single phrase*, in itself of an indefinite

indefinite nature, which has been differently understood by different writers, and which, in the case before us, absolutely militates against the meaning of the original author, to whom the appeal is here made, the reader shall be left to determine.

But in order to "evince beyond all possible doubt, (to make use of the Professor's strong language on this occasion,) that the Bishop's cure was originally confined to a *single* Church or Congregation;" P. 210.—The Professor proceeds to state with confidence the language of Ignatius, as intended to confirm that idea: where the holy Martyr says to the Philadelphians; "Εν θυσιαστηριον, ως εις Επισκοπος."—"There is but one Altar, as there is but one Bishop."—"The illustration (says the Professor) of *one Bishop*, puts it beyond question, what sort of unity St. Ignatius ascribes to the Altar, "one Altar as one Bishop;" i. e. one identical thing in both cases: with the view of proving, that all antiquity is unanimous in assigning to one Bishop no more than one εκκλησια or Congregation, and one παροικια or Parish. For this reason, though it was a proper

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Episcopacy, in respect of the disparity of the Ministers, it was a *parochial* Episcopacy in respect to the extent of the charge." P. 209.

The reflection which the Professor has cast on those who differ from him in opinion, with respect to the meaning intended to be conveyed by the above-cited language of Ignatius, in pages 211, 212, is not more unworthy the Professor's character, than my notice. I proceed therefore, without comment, to the point to be ascertained.

The Reader has already seen what strength the word παροικια, and the phrase επι το αυτο, as interpreted by the Professor, have contributed to the foundation on which he builds on this occasion. He may now judge whether the language of Ignatius is calculated to furnish him with sounder materials.

The idea annexed to Ignatius's words, Εν θυσιαστηριον, &c. by the Professor, is, that "as there can be in one diocese but one individual Bishop, there can be in one diocese but one individual altar." &c. Page 212. Hence from the expressions to be found

found in the primitive writings of *one prayer*, and *one supplication*; and the supposed personal superintendance of the Bishop over his whole flock, together with his personal administration of all the offices of Religion, the Professor proceeds to the conclusion, that "it is not possible to conceive otherwise of the Bishop, during the period of which he is speaking, (namely the second and third centuries) than of *the Pastor of a single parish.*" P. 214.

If this idea of the Episcopal Office be so necessarily connected with it, that it is not possible that any other should be entertained on this subject, than what the Professor here delivers to the world; it may be asked, how it is to be accounted for, that such idea should have had no existence in the human mind during the first fifteen centuries of the Christian æra; particularly that during the three first centuries of the Christian Church, when the language of the primitive writers must have been better understood than they can be at present, in consequence of the practice which furnished a continued comment upon them, no such idea relative to the very confined

nature

nature of the Episcopal Office is any where to be found. And if such idea did not exist during the three first centuries of the Church; we shall not be called upon to demonstrate the certainty of its having had no existence in the world, prior to the introduction of the Presbyterian model in the sixteenth century.

When we consider moreover the strong and unqualified manner, in which the Professor protests against the modern pre-eminence of the Episcopal character, as an encroachment on the original right of the Presbyter; we cannot but think that the circumstance of a Presbyter of Jerom's learning and character, fully acquainted, as he must be, with the true merits of the case, and engaged as he was in repelling the arrogant pretensions of the Deacon against his own office; admitting in the most unequivocal language the acknowledged station of the Bishop to be distinct from, and superior to, that of Presbyter, as furnishing the most incontrovertible testimony against the position which the Professor had at heart to establish.

St. Jerom, in his Epistle to Evagrius, writes

writes thus; "Wherever * a Bishop is, whether at Rome, Eugubium, Constantinople or Rhegium, Alexandria or Tani, he is of the same merit, and the same Priesthood. Neither the power of riches, nor the humility of poverty, maketh a Bishop higher or lower; but they are all successors of the Apostles."—"With us, (says he in his Ep. contra Montan.) the Bishops hold the place of the Apostles." In his Ep. ad Nepot. he writes; "Be subject to the Bishop and receive him as the Father of your Soul."—And the power which the Bishops possessed he elsewhere calls "a supremacy, a plenitude of power, the sublime and divine power of governing the Church, an unaccountable and eminent power."—"Exors quædam et ab omnibus eminens potestas." Such was the light in which St. Jerom placed the supreme office

* "Ubicunque fuerit Episcopus, sive Romæ, sive Eugubii, sive Constantinopoli, sive Rhegii, sive Alexandriæ, sive Tanis, ejusdem meriti est, et ejusdem Sacerdotii, potentia Divitiarum et Paupertatis humilitas, vel sublimiorem vel inferiorem Episcopum non facit. Cæterum omnes Apostolorum successores sunt."—
Hieron. ad Evagr.

of

of Bishop; who, though a Presbyter himself, and in that character desirous of magnifying his own office against the arrogant pretensions of the Deacon, at the same time took care to mark that line of distinction drawn by the *exclusive* right of ordination, between the office of Bishop and Presbyter, which determined the subjection of the Presbyter to his Bishop; and by observing on the same occasion, " that the Apostolical constitution was taken from the Law; consequently, that what Aaron, his Sons, and the Levites were in the Temple, the same are the Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons in the Church." Such a testimony from such a quarter, might, it should be supposed, put an end to all dispute on this point. And if disputes were not the children of pride, prejudice, and passion, much more than of reason, it certainly would.

But in page 356 the Professor tells his pupils, in reference to Presbyterian Ordination, that " whoever is ordained among them is ordained a bishop by a class of bishops. We are not the less bishops (continues the Professor) in every thing essential

tial, for being more conformable to the Apostolical and Primitive models, when every bishop had but one parish, one congregation, one church, one altar, one communion table."—According to the Apostolic model then, every bishop had but one parish, one congregation. "This parish (the Professor elsewhere says) was generally no more than one city or village with its suburbs and environs: and this city, &c. containing but *one church* or *congregation*." P. 218.—Admitting these Premisses, nothing can be more evident, than that the language of Ignatius, from which the Professor has concluded that there was but one bishop in one city and its environs, which, it is probable, was the extent of a primitive bishop's charge, does not apply to the Presbyters, for whose episcopal authority the Professor is here pleading. In St. Luke's History of the Apostolic Acts, we read that Barnabas and Paul "ordained *Presbyters* in every church." Acts xiv. 23. —From which incontrovertible evidence it appears, that whilst according to the united testimony of Antiquity, there could be but *one* bishop in *one* church, there might be

be, and certainly were from the beginning, *many Presbyters.* Therefore, the Presbyters ordained in every Church must be different persons from the Bishop, of whom Ignatius is speaking; otherwise his authority militates against that of St. Luke: consequently, the high authority of which the Professor seems here desirous of availing himself, does not apply to the point which that authority is brought to prove.

But the Professor, with the view of establishing the ground on which the whole strength of his congregational system is built, proceeds to amuse his pupils with an imaginary description of the Primitive Church, during the three first centuries; I call it *imaginary*, because the plain evidence of facts, if produced, would be found at complete variance with it. After having observed to his pupils, that previous to the building magnificent edifices for the reception of Christian assemblies, the best accommodation, for more than a century, was the private houses of the wealthiest disciples, on which account the congregations, for more than a cen-

tury, could not be numerous: the Professor proceeds to calculate the number of Christians in the places where the Apostles planted Churches, to amount to one *thirtieth* of the people: and on the ground of this calculation, (the offspring of the Professor's own imagination,) he concludes, that "one of the primitive Bishoprics, in order to afford a congregation equal to that of a middling parish, ought to have been equal in extent to *thirty parishes* in this island."

Had the Professor wished to enable his pupils to form a decided judgement on the actual state of the Primitive Church, the Bible would have furnished him with authentic testimony on the subject; and it seems somewhat singular that a Professor, reading Lectures on Ecclesiastical History, should unnecessarily lead his pupils into the field of imaginary conjecture, or should prefer the authority of Bingham and Tillemont, whose testimony at best does not bear directly on the point in question, to that of St. Luke. But when the reader shall have placed St. Luke's testimony before

fore him, he may perhaps be at no loss for the reason of its having been passed over in silence.

The Church of Jerusalem was the first founded by the Apostles; in conformity with the express direction of our Saviour before he left the world. Luke xxiv. 47.—Of this Church, according to the testimony of Hegesippus and other early writers, St. James was appointed Bishop by the Apostles themselves. The number of Disciples first assembled together at Jerusalem, (mentioned in Acts i. 15.) amounted to one hundred and twenty. To these were soon added three thousand souls. Acts ii. 41.—And to this number we read (v. 47.) "the Lord daily added." Proceeding with the History of this Mother Church, we find Acts iv. 4. the number of its members increased to five thousand. And believers, both of men and women, were still adding to the Church. Acts v. 14. "Still the word of God (we read Acts vi. 7.) increased; and the number of Disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly;" insomuch, that in a few years we find, on St. Paul's return from his commission to the Gentiles, these thousands

sands of converted Jews were described by the multiplied number of *myriads*. " ποσαι μυριαδες εισιν." Acts xxi. 21. These myriads of Christian converts could not assemble together; for if such a thing had been practicable, there was no building for the purpose; their best accommodation, for more than a century, being, according to the Professor's admission, *private houses*. From whence it follows, that the Bishop of Jerusalem must have had many congregations of Christians under his superintendance at a time, and consequently many Presbyters officiating under him for the discharge of ministerial purposes. And St. Luke's History confirms this representation; for when St. Paul went in unto James, the Bishop of Jerusalem, for the purpose of making his report relative to the success of his Mission to the Gentiles, " all the Presbyters (we read) were present." Acts xxi. 18.

To this testimony of the inspired Penman may be added that of Tertullian, who lived most of his time in the second century; who in his Apology to the Roman Magistrates, which was written about the year

year 200, glories in the multitude of Christian Professors. "We (says he) are of yesterday; * yet every place is filled with us; your cities, the islands, the forts, your corporations, the councils, the armies, the tribes and companies: yea, the palace, senate, and courts of justice; your temples only have we left free. Should we go off and separate from you, you would stand amazed at your own desolation, be affrighted at the stop and deadness of affairs amongst you: and you would have more enemies than subjects left you."—And in his Treatise addressed to the persecuting Scapula, he fairly tells him, which he would not have ventured to have done, had not the fact been true, that so great was the multitude of Christians, that they constituted "almost the greatest part of every City:" *Pars pene*

* "Hesterni sumus, et vestra omnia implevimus; urbes, insulas, castella, municipia, conciliabula, castra ipsa, tribus, decurias, palatium, senatum, forum: sola vobis reliquimus templa." Tertull. Apol. p. 33. cap. 37.—Si tanta vis hominum in aliquem orbis remoti sinum abrupissemus a vobis,—procul dubio expavissetis ad solitudinem vestram, ad silentium verum, et stuporem quendam quasi mortui orbis." Ib. ib.

major

major cujusque civitatis." Tertul. ad Scap. c. ii. p. 86. The accurate Historian, Eusebius, who wrote his history early in the fourth century, speaking in general of the Primitive Christian Churches in every city and country about the *close of the Apostolic age;* uses such singular terms to express the number contained in them, as denote them to be rather hosts and legions, than "*congregations of middling parishes,*" as the Professor describes them, by comparing their "*thronged and crowded societies to grain heaped upon a barn floor.*"* And speaking of the peaceful times which the Christians enjoyed during the last forty years of the third century, he thus expresses himself. "Who san describe (says he) the innumerable increase and concourse of them? the numbers of assemblies *in each city*? and the extraordinary meetings in their houses of prayer? So that not content with the buildings they had of old, they founded new and larger *Churches*

* "Καὶ δῆτα ἀνὰ πάσας πόλεις τε καὶ κώμας, πληθύσης ἄλλοσε ἄλλων, μυριανδροι καὶ παμπληθεις ἀθρόως ἐκκλησίαι συνήλασαν."

Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. 2. c. 3.

throughout

throughout *every city*."* To which shall be added only what Optatus, Bishop of Milevis says, that when Dioclesian destroyed the Christian Churches, (which was within five years after the expiration of the third century,) there was above forty Basilicæ, or public places for Christian worship, in the single city of Rome.†

From the foregoing testimony, (to which much might be easily added,) when opposed to the description given by the Professor of the state of the Church in the primitive days, in which, according to the Professor's imaginary calculation, " one Bishopric, in order to afford a congregation equal to that of a middling parish, is supposed to have been equal in extent to thirty modern parishes;" p. 216.—I shall leave the reader to draw his own conclusion, conceiving that further proof on this point cannot be necessary.

* Πῶς δ' ἂν τὶς διαγράψειε τὰς μυριάνδρους ἐκείνας ἐπισυναγωγὰς; καὶ τὰ πλήθη τῶν κατὰ πόλιν ἀθροισμάτων, τὰς τε ἐπισήμους ἐν τοῖς προσευκτηρίοις συνδρομὰς; ὧν δὴ ἕνεκα μηδαμῶς ἔτι, τοῖς παλαιοῖς οἰκοδομήμασι ἀρκούμενοι, εὐρείας εἰς πλάτος ἀνὰ πάσας τὰς πόλεις ἐκ θεμελίων ἀνέσαν Ἐκκλησίας."—Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. viii. c. 1.

† Vide Optat. de Schism. Donat. l. ii. p. 39.

From

From what has been said, the intelligent reader has seen of what materials the foundation is composed, on which the Professor has raised his superstructure on this occasion. He will therefore judge it unnecessary that time should be wasted in examining into the defects to be found in different parts of his building; because, with what skill and contrivance soever the several parts of it may be put together, the whole structure must fall to the ground, so long as the foundation on which it is placed, shall prove unequal to its support.

The great point the Professor labours to prove is, that as there was but one Bishop in a Church, so there was but one Church to a Bishop. This is certainly primitive language; and would moreover be primitive truth, if the Professor's notion of a particular Church, (by which he understands only a *single* congregation,) did not turn a Catholic maxim into an equivocal proposition. This point relative to the word *Church* being in primitive language used to denote only a *single congregation*; except when meant to apply to the Catholic Church in general, the Professor endeavours to establish

blish (as he says) "*beyond all possible doubt*," by the interpretation annexed to the word παροικια; by the expression επι το αυτο used by Justin Martyr, and other primitive writers, and by the language of Ignatius; Εν θυσιαστηριον ως εις Επισκοπος. There is but one Altar, as but one Bishop."

These several evidences have been examined. The result of that examination has been, that they prove against the point intended to be established by them.

The evidence furnished by the original interpretation of the word παροικια, leads to a conclusion the very opposite to the one attempted to be here drawn from it. The evidence drawn from the interpretation annexed by the Professor to the phrase επι το αυτο, is grounded on a sense of it totally irreconcileable with the meaning of the author, who originally used it. Whilst the interpretation annexed by the Professor to the words of Ignatius, at the same time that it is a total perversion of the Martyr's meaning, argues a compleat ignorance of the language of primitive antiquity.

Had the Professor been moderately conversant with the writings of Cyprian, to whose

whose authority he has appealed, he would have found a passage in them which furnished so plain a comment on the foregoing language of Ignatius, as to render a misinterpretation of it impossible. "No man (says Cyprian) can regularly constitute another Altar, or a new Priesthood, besides the one Altar, and the one Priesthood."* This passage of Cyprian has always been considered as parallel to, and consequently explanatory of the foregoing one from Ignatius. The same idea conveyed in both, opens the meaning of all similar expressions, so frequently to be met with in the writings of the primitive Fathers: by which we understand that the Unity of the Altar, the Unity of the Bishop, the Unity of Prayer; in short, the Unity of the Church, are all founded on the common principle of the *Unity of the Christian Priesthood.* A figurative but striking description of which Unity, we have in that celebrated passage of Cyprian; a passage so noted in its kind, that it should not have

* "Aliud Altare constitui, aut Sacerdotium novum fieri, præter *unum Altare*, et *unum Sacerdotiam*, non potest."—Cypr. Ep. xl. §. 4.

escaped

escaped the observation of the Professor.—"Episcopacy (says Cyprian in his small tract of the Unity of the Church) is but *one*; a part whereof each (Bishop) holds, so as to be interested for the whole. The Church is also *one*; which by its fruitful increase improves into a multitude; as the beams of the Sun are many; as branches from trees and streams from a fountain; whose number, though it seems dispersed by the abundant plenty of them, yet their unity is preserved by the common original of them all." *

Let this simple principle of Unity be applied to the several primitive expressions of our Church, "*One Altar, one Bishop;*" and it will be found to consist with as many Churches, Altars, and Bishops, as can be proved to be undeniably derived from one and the same *original institutor.*

* "Episcopatus est unus, cujus a singulis in solidum pars tenetur. Ecclesia quoque una est, quæ in multitudinem latius incremento fœcunditatis extenditur; quo modo Solii multi radii, sed lumen unum, &c. Numerositas licet diffusa videatur exunditatis copiæ largitate, unitas tamen servatur in origine."—Cypr. de Unit. Eccl. p. 108.

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The Unity of whose divine power and spirit, diffused at first among the chosen Twelve, stamps a Character of Unity upon all who regularly descend from them: and upon every individual, who only claims under, and owns his authority from, and his dependance on such as them. Consequently the Unity of separate congregations of Christians assembled within the same diocese, consisted, according to the primitive idea on this subject, in the ministerial offices of each congregation being performed by a person duly authorized, and acting under the appointment and direction of the rightful Bishop of the whole flock.—Thus the plurality of Eucharists is made *one*, throughout all the united Provinces and Dioceses of the Catholic Church; in conformity to the well known maxim, "Qui facit per alium, facit per se."—Thus Ignatius, one of the great Advocates for the Unity of the Christian Altar, when he says, "Let that Eucharist be looked upon as firm and established," interprets his meaning by adding; *"which is either

* Ἡ ὑπὸ τὸν ἐπίσκοπον οὖσα, ἢ ᾧ ἂν αὐτὸς ἐπιτρέψῃ.

offered

offered by the Bishop, *or by him to whom the Bishop has committed it.*"—The Bishop was then, in the primitive Church, considered as the centre of Unity to that particular Church, over which he was placed. So long as all order of ministration in that Church was regularly derived from him, and carried on under his superintending authority, so long the Unity of that Church was preserved. Thus Tertullian in his book about Baptism, to the question, "Who may baptize?" answers positively; "*The High-Priest*, who is *the Bishop*, hath the power of baptizing; and after him (or in subordination to him,) Presbyters and Deacons; but not without the *Bishop's authority.*"*—And before his time, the Apostolical Ignatius, who spent almost all his days in the first century, said in express terms; "That it is not lawful to baptize without the Bishop.†"

Much more might be said; was it not

* "Dandi quidem jus habet summus Sacerdos, qui est Episcopus; dehinc Presbyteri et Diaconi; non tamen sine Episcopi auctoritate." C. 17.

† Οὐκ ἐξόν ἐστιν χωρὶς τοῦ Ἐπισκόπου ὔτε βαπτίζειν, &c.
Epist. ad Smyrn. p. 6.

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my purpose to confine my observations chiefly to those points which constitute the foundation, on which the Professor has raised his *imaginary* superstructure, respecting the Constitution of the primitive Church. The reader has seen, that the Catholic phrase of *One Altar* and *one Bishop*, used by Ignatius, on which the Professor builds with such confidence and apparent security, no more proves the necessity of but *one* congregation in a primitive Bishop's Diocese, than it would do in the most extensive one of this or any other former ages; provided every person who ministered at each separate congregation, had a regular commission from his Bishop for so doing. The reader has had the meaning of Ignatius explained by himself; and that meaning confirmed by the testimony of Tertullian and Cyprian, both living within the third century of the Church. He has seen enough, it is therefore presumed, to authorize the conclusion, that the Professor has in this case dealt with the testimony of Ignatius, as he had before done with that drawn from other quarters; namely, brought it to prove what the author of it never

never designed that it should prove. The reader will also perceive (if I have succeeded in treating this subject intelligibly,) that the Professor's misinterpretation on this occasion, has proceeded from an ignorance of the language of the primitive writers; in which the expression, *One Altar*, is used to signify, not *one individual altar*, (as the Professor understands it;) but the communion of the Bishop, though in distant places and Churches; in allusion to the *one altar* at Jerusalem under the Law, and the *one High-Priest*; with whom the Synagogues in different places, and all the inferior Priests, did communicate; without supposing the personal presence of the High-Priest: upon the general idea, that *personal* presence, and *virtual* presence by delegated authority, meant the *same* thing. Of this imperfect acquaintance with the language of the Scriptures and antiquity, many more instances, certainly of not less importance, must occur to the recollection of all those scholars and critics, who have read, with due attention, the sundry dissertations and discussions, crowded into his translation

translation of the Gospels; more to support particular prejudices, and to serve, it would seem, party purposes, than to promote the general interests of Christianity.

The unsoundness of the materials, of which the Professor's foundation is composed, having now been laid open; the superstructure raised upon it may be left to its fate. Where premisses are false, the conclusion drawn from them cannot be true. The detection of the former renders therefore the disproval of the latter but a waste of time.

Thus much I have judged necessary to say, with the view of guarding those who may be strangers to the subject before us, from paying more deference to the authority of Dr. Campbell, than, on this occasion he is entitled to challenge. His publication appears to me, to contain one of the most hostile, most illiberal, and most unsupported attacks upon the Episcopacy of the Church of Christ, that ever has been made. Those who would enter more at large into his subject, from the complete satisfaction to be found, in one or other

other of the publications mentioned in the margin,* on every prominent feature of the Professor's argument; will be surprized that a man of the Professor's acknowledged abilities, should commit himself in the maintenance of points, which have been repeatedly and decidedly disproved.

But though I do not profess to follow the learned Professor through all the ground over which he has travelled; there are however two parts of his publication, which wear too strong marks of illiberality towards the Episcopal Churches of England and Scotland, to be passed over wholly unnoticed. We are prepared to

* "Dr. Maurice on Diocesan Episcopacy."—"The Principles of the Cyprianic Age, together with its Vindication against Gilbert Rule, by Bishop Sage, of the Scotch Episcopal Church. Anno. 1695."—"An Original Draught of the Primitive Church, in Answer to a Discourse entitled an Enquiry into the Constitution, Discipline, Unity, and Worship of the Primitive Church, within the first three hundred years after Christ. Anno 1717." To which may be added the excellent Review of Dr. Campbell's Ecclesiastical History, that has lately appeared in the Anti-Jacobin Numbers for February 1801, et seq.

make all due allowance for those prejudices generated by different habits of education, which lead others to an opinion different from our own on the subject of Ecclesiastical government: at the same time that we lament the existence of that difference, because it necessarily tends to the destruction of that Unity, which under God, constitutes the surest preservative of the Christian Faith. For the promotion of this Unity, that "with one heart and one mouth God" might be glorified; and Division, the parent of Heresy, prevented; the Christian Church, with its appropriate government was originally established. From the evidence furnished by the Sacred Writings and primitive practice of the Church, if fairly appreciated, it appears evident almost to demonstration, that the government of the Church of England is built on the foundation laid by the Apostles, in conformity with the directions they received. And when we consider the various divisions that unfortunately took place among Christians on subjects of inferior moment; more particularly when we advert to that notorious attempt

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to raise the office of the Deacon above that of the Presbyter, which called forth most pointed animadversions from St. Jerom; we think it next to an impossibility, (admitting Presbyters to be of like passions with other men,) that there should not be found in the History of the Church, the least trace of any remonstrance on the part of the Presbyter, against the superior authority of his Bishop; supposing the Episcopal authority really to have been, what the Professor has studiously represented it, "an unwarrantable usurpation and encroachment on the original Presbyterian form of Church government."—But we are not reduced to the necessity of depending on this argument; on what strong ground soever it may appear to stand; being furnished with the most decisive evidence to prove, that the direction of the affairs of the Church was originally carried on by three distinct Ministers; who, according to their respective degrees of office, became, towards the end of the Apostolic age, distinguished from each other, by the appropriate titles of Bishop, Presbyter, and Deacon;

Deacon; in conformity with a similar distinction in the Jewish Church, of High Priest, Priest, and Levite. That such a correspondence between the Jewish and Christian Church should be preserved, is what will be expected by every one who considers, that the one was designed to be the Type of the other; and that the same Divine Being was the founder of both.

It is admitted by the Professor himself, "that the outward form of Church polity, though not of the essentials of Religion, is not to be considered as a matter absolutely indifferent; for though the house in which a man lodges makes no part of his person, either of his body or his soul; one house may prove a very comfortable and convenient lodging, and another so incommodious as to be scarcely habitable. And certain it is (continues the Professor) that one model of Church government may be much better calculated for promoting the belief and obedience of the Gospel than another." P. 249.—The rational conclusion from which premisses appears to be, that such model of government in this case was prescribed and adopted; it not being

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to be conceived that, a Divine Founder of a Church would fail to pay attention to a circumstance, on which the successful promotion of the object he had in view on the occasion so much depended. Nor is it to be imagined that He, by whose express appointment the service of the Jewish Church had been regulated, and who in his own person paid a delicate regard to the ordinances of the *old* dispensation, which were to give way to the *new;* should leave the affairs of the Christian Church in an irregular and unsettled condition.

To say then "*with freedom,*" (as the Professor does in P. 141.) that if a particular form of polity had been essential to the Church, it had been laid down in another manner in the Sacred Book, is not so much to reason, as to presume. Whilst the admission, that the success of the Gospel might depend much on the model of Church government, tends to demonstrate the impropriety of the position. That our Saviour accompanied the delivery of the Apostolic commission with any particular directions on this subject, the Sacred

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Records certainly furnish no data to prove. At the same time, the fair conclusion to be drawn from the circumstance of the Apostles not having left on record the directions they might have received, is not, that no directions were delivered; but that for sufficient reasons they were not judged necessary to be particularized.

But whether our Saviour did or did not deliver directions in person on this subject, so long as the Apostles are allowed to have carried on their office under the immediate guidance of the Holy Spirit, the model of Church government which they adopted, must be considered as equally sanctioned by Divine Authority. In what that model consisted, there has been but one opinion in the Church, from the days of the Apostles down to the present time: an opinion which all the attempts from time to time to justify separation from it, have been unable to invalidate.

That no marked deviation from the Jewish model of Church government, is expressly to be found in the Apostolic Writings, is more than presumptive proof that no such deviation took place; for had such

such been the case, the certain consequence of that strong prejudice which the Jewish converts to Christianity, still retained for the Mosaic Dispensation must have been, that such a notorious, and to them offensive, deviation from it, could not have been passed over in silence. From the silence of the Sacred Records then on this subject we draw a conclusion, the very opposite to what Latitudinarians draw from it; by considering it as furnishing that species of circumstantial proof, in favor of the ministry of the Christian Church having been modelled after that of the Jewish Temple, built on the ground of rational conclusion, which nothing short of the most decided contrary evidence can be deemed competent to set aside.

But that such a correspondence between the government of the Jewish and Christian Churches did actually exist; the writings of the above mentioned Clement, together with those of Ignatius, Cyprian, and St. Jerom, to mention no other; authorize us to affirm: otherwise, their writings, from the analogical mode of reasoning occasionally to be found in them, relative to

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the different orders in the Levitical Priesthood, on the supposition that no analogy between that and the Christian Priesthood subsisted, were calculated to deceive the parties to whom they were addressed.

But whilst we thus feel ourselves justified in deriving the Constitution of our National Church from its *undoubted Apostolic origin;* still we do not think ourselves authorized, by the spirit of the Religion we profess, to revile Dr. Campbell, because the establishment with which he was connected stands, in our opinion, on no better foundation, than that which was originally laid by John Calvin. At the same time it must be observed, that had not Dr. Campbell's name been prefixed to the publication under consideration, we should have concluded, that it could not possibly have fallen from the pen of a member of any regular Religious Establishment whatever; but from that of some levelling Independant: whilst in the general management of the argument, we are constrained to say, that the able and ingenious Refuter of the sophistical Hume is not often to be traced.

Indeed, interested as we are for the consistency

sistency of the character of a man, who once, much to his credit, and the satisfaction of the Christian world, was the able and successful Champion of Truth, against one of the most powerful of her enemies; we find it difficult to persuade ourselves, that this work, which can be highly acceptable only to wild Independants, and strongly prejudiced members of the Scotch Kirk, could be left by Dr. Campbell for publication, as it is.

But when we hear a Presbyter of the Scotch Kirk, (a Religious Establishment unknown to the world for the first fifteen hundred years of Christianity,) indecently reviling the form of Church polity, established in this country; by stigmatizing, what we maintain to be a *Divine Institution*, with the coarse title of an "arrogant pretension, the offspring of sectarian bigotry and ignorance;" (P. 141.) our thoughts are suddenly carried back to those disgraceful days of *covenanted zeal*, which charity towards Christian Brethren disposes us to forget. And though we feel indisposed to return any answer to such language: we cannot refrain from lamenting the

the assumption of that dictatorial authority; by which an individual deals out his peremptory decrees with that contemptuous disregard of others, which no distinction of talents can excuse, no pre-eminence of learning justify. And when it is considered moreover, that the Professor prepared these Lectures for the press; we think that what Dr. Johnson said of Lord Chesterfield, he might probably, had he been living, have applied on this occasion to Dr. Campbell; by saying, that he had charged his blunderbuss against the Church of England, and left it to his executors to be fired off; because he himself was afraid of the recoil: for the Professor must have known, it is presumed, that there were not wanting Divines in the Church of England, (and I add with pleasure, in the Episcopal Church of Scotland also,) qualified to remove that veil of fallacy, with which, through the concurrent assistance of unfair representation, partial quotation, inconclusive reasoning, and confident assertion, he has contrived to disguise, and thereby disgrace the cause he undertook to maintain.

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To what the Professor has thought proper to say on the subject of the Scotch Episcopal Church, the Reviewer of Dr. Campbell's Lectures in the Anti-Jacobin has rendered any farther reply unnecessary. The weakness of the ground the Professor has taken, for the purpose of supporting his illiberal attack on the Episcopal character of the Scotch Bishops, has been so completely laid open by this manly, clear, and judicious critic; that to dwell longer on the subject, would be to trespass on the time and patience of the intelligent reader. I shall only therefore briefly observe; that Dr. Campbell must be little acquainted with the nature of the Christian Church, to suppose that any human authority can annihilate the Apostolical commission of its Divine Founder. And that no suspension in the exercise of that commission has taken place in Scotland, the regular succession of the Scotch Episcopacy furnishes demonstrative proof. Whilst Dr. Campbell's attempt to deprive the Scotch Bishops of their just title to the Episcopal character, grounded on the circumstance of their not having the charge

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of any particular diocese to superintend; (were the fact admitted to be strictly true;) appears to have no more of reason to support it, than would the attempt of a lawless banditti, who had made a forcible entry into my parsonage, and by violence driven me from the charge of my parish; to deprive me of my pastoral character, because I had it no longer in my power to feed my particular flock. And when I consider on the one hand, the steps by which Presbytery in Scotland arrived at its present establishment; and on the other, the Christian resignation which has marked the character of the Scotch Episcopal Church during the days of her humiliation; I feel no hesitation in declaring, on the supposition that Church government was a subject of more doubtful controversy then it really is; Malo cum Episcopo errare, quam cum Presbyteris rectè sentire.

It is indeed to be lamented, that it is become the fashion in these days, which are remarkable for nothing so much as for the unsettlement of all established institutions, to weigh the *Circumstantials* of Religion

Religion against the *Essentials* of it; as if there was a necessity of drawing a comparison between two things, which the Deity designed never to be separated. This plan of setting the purity of religion against the *Establishment* of it, the author of all confusion has already adopted with signal success; and the Church of Christ in this country, has never completely recovered from the fatal experiment. Did nations grow wise by experience, it might be hoped, that language, which has been so fully understood, should be incapable of leading thinking minds into a second imposition. To those who now make use of it for the same purpose to which it so effectually ministered at a former period of our History, we of the Clergy must, it is supposed, continue to be silent; for we are the last persons they wish to hear. But to those pious well-meaning people, who suffer their minds to be so occupied with one idea on this subject, as to leave little or no place for any other, we beg leave to say a few words, in the hope, that with them our influence is not, as yet, entirely lost.

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We would wish them to consider then, that Religion, though a subject of a spiritual nature, must be adapted to the condition of the parties for whom it is designed. That the form and spirit of it, though in themselves essentially distinct from each other, appear nevertheless to have been so connected together by its Divine Author, that their separation has generally proved mutually destructive. All true Religion, it should be remembered, has its source in Revelation. To that same source the essentials, and for the most part the circumstantials of it also, are to be traced up. Considered in that light, it is our Duty to hold them in equal reverence. The Divine Author of Religion at all times knew by what means the knowledge of it was to be best preserved in the world. Under every dispensation of it, he has not failed therefore to provide accordingly. And by our conformity to the provision made, we may rest assured, the end designed to be answered by it, will be most effectually secured. "But (to make use of the observation of the judicious Butler,) as it is one of the peculiar weaknesses of human

man nature, when, upon a comparison of two things, one is found to be of greater importance than the other, to consider this other as of scarce any importance at all; it is highly necessary that we remind ourselves, how great presumption it is, to make light of any Institutions of Divine Appointment; that our obligations to obey all God's commands whatever, are absolute and indispensible: and that Commands merely positive, admitted to be from him, lay us under a moral obligation to obey him; an obligation moral in the strictest and most proper sense."—Butler's Analogy, p. 270.

Whatever hasty idea some pious persons may have been occasionally led to form on the subject; they may be convinced, if they will judge the Clergy fairly; that our zeal for the essence of religion is not less warm than their own; although there may be a difference of opinion between themselves and us, with respect to the best mode of exercising it. The provision made under the Christian Dispensation for the preservation of true religion in the world, we are persuaded, was the *Apostolic Constitution*

tution of the Church. To the circumstantials of order and government, as they exist in the Episcopal Church of this country, considered as a branch of the Catholic Church of Christ, we look up, as to means divinely appointed, for the purpose of conducing to a certain important end.

Were we to be asked, in the loose but imposing language of the day, which we thought to be of most importance; the *Circumstantials* of Religion or the *Essentials* of it? we should hold the question to be as little entitled to answer, as if we were to be asked; which we thought of most consequence, the *Body*, or the *Garment* that covers it? because, it is presumed, that none but fools or madmen will expose the human frame to the injuries it must suffer from the inclemency of seasons, on the conviction that the covering appointed for the preservation of the body was, comparatively speaking, of infinitely less value, than the body intended to be preserved by it.

With this idea in my mind, I think that the greatest service the Clergy can do to the

the cause in which they are engaged, not less than to the country to which they belong; will be to convince all persons really disposed for conviction on the subject, that the "lips of the priest in this land still preserve that knowledge, which is to be expected from his mouth. Conviction on this head will most effectually counteract separation from the Church; by removing the ostensible cause of it: and should it not succeed so far, as to bring Separatists back from the error of their ways, it will at least, with the blessing of God, preserve those members of the Church from going astray, who still remain in it.

The great body of the people in this country are attached to their Bible. Generally speaking, they know when they hear it. And if they hear it, as they ought to do, in the Church, they will certainly have no reason, and it is to be hoped little inclination, to wander in search of it in other places. And when it is considered, that the great body of the people carry with them the political weight of the country they inhabit; their religious instruction ought to constitute an object of primary

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importance in every well-regulated government.

To behold with indifference that growing separation from the Church, which ignorance, misguided zeal, and the prevalence of latitudinarian principles have contributed to introduce among us, would argue a want of attachment to the Christian cause, which no honest Minister of the Church can be supposed to feel. When therefore it is considered, that the Establishment, whether of Church or State, in any country, depends for its security on the support which it receives from public opinion; the obvious conclusion appears to be, that in proportion as the direction of that opinion is withdrawn from those teachers, to whom the Constitution in Church and State has committed it, will the Establishment in either case be proportionably endangered.

But when the Church is viewed, not merely in its political connection, but as a society incorporated by divine wisdom, for the purpose of preserving the standard of Christian truth in the world; the conviction that a corruption of the doctrine of

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the Church is the general consequence of a separation from its government, leads to the still more serious apprehension, that such separation may increase to a degree, to render the removal of a Church from any country, a judgement necessary to be carried into execution.

So long therefore, as a rectitude of sentiment in religion continues to be regarded as a matter of importance, so long will the possession of a well educated Clergy be deemed essential, to the spiritual condition of a Christian country. This is a consideration which must weigh heavy in the scale of every thinking man.

I speak with cautious reverence and fear; acknowledging myself liable to error. But it will be happy for those who shall live some years hence, if they can prove me guilty of error on the subject, to which I now more immediately allude.

The times in which we live call for all the energy of the human mind, to stop the progress of that desolating system, which derives its origin from the licentious creed, which has long been stealing on the

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world. To the Clergy, as to the appointed guardians of the Christian Altar, the professional interpreters of the Evangelic code, and the constitutional promoters of order and government, the public eye is in such times particularly directed. And whilst there is any spring of Theological activity in the Clerical mind; whilst any energy of religious zeal, any regard for professional character remains in the Clerical heart;—they will not disappoint the public expectation; but will continue to be, what they heretofore have been, the most learned, as well as the most zealous, of Christian Divines.

In such case; should it be the will of Providence to put the Church of this country to a severer trial, than she has hitherto experienced; we shall have the consolation to think, that her Watchmen will be found prepared for the event. And though, in Divine Wisdom it may be judged necessary, to rouse us from that lukewarmness and indifference, which are too apt to graft themselves upon a state of undisturbed prosperity; still we trust, that the spirit of

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our pious Reformers will not be found so far to have departed, as to provoke God to remove his Candlestick from this favoured land; but, that through Grace, it may be permitted to give light among us *even unto the End.*

DISCOURSE

DISCOURSE

DISCOURSE I.

HEB. XIII. 8.

Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

THE Prophecies delivered, and the Miracles recorded in the different parts of Holy Writ, prove the dignity of the person to whom they refer: "the testimony of Jesus being, in their respective ways, the spirit of both."

Taken collectively, they furnish an assemblage of proof, in support of the stupendous scheme for the salvation of man, moving on from its origin in the divine councils, through several appointed stages of advancement, to its perfect accomplishment at the consummation of all things; which, if fully drawn forth and duly appreciated, places the truth of Christianity on that firm basis of Revelation, which bids

bids defiance to every attack that infidelity can make against it.

All sound members of the Church therefore, must consider themselves indebted to champions, who, in the armour of truth, take the field against those Goliahs of infidelity, who, in our days of rebuke and blasphemy, are come forth to defy the armies of the living God: whose object is no longer confined to insidious and disguised attacks on the Church of Christ; but has manifested itself in that open and determined hostility to it, which, in the paroxysms of their atheistic insanity, they have promised themselves, will terminate in its total destruction.

But, whilst some of the Watchmen of Israel are engaged in the field with the open and declared enemies of Christianity; others may be not less usefully employed, in confirming the faith of those who are still desirous of holding fast their professional engagement. Whilst some are honourably employed in tearing away the disguise from that wretched system, which, under the veil of superior perfection, is now endeavouring to cheat the world to its utter

utter ruin; others may contribute something to the general cause, by rendering Christians less open to the specious reasonings of those false philosophers; who have proved, to the conviction of every thinking mind, that in "professing themselves wise, they are, in the emphatic and appropriate language of the Apostle, become very fools."

For, as all heresy is a stage of advancement towards open infidelity; every successful attempt to establish the truth, as it is in Christ Jesus, must tend to stop, in a degree, the progress of those baneful principles; which, in exchange for our best enjoyments and best expectations, offer nothing to the contemplative mind, but a disorganized society, and an hopeless futurity.

With these ideas before me, my object will now be, not to prove the establishment of Christianity, by tracing its fortunes, with the concurring light of history and prophecy, through the different stages of its progress in the world; a work which must have addressed itself chiefly to the learned; but to write down to the understanding of the more common Christian; by illustrating

ing and confirming the essential doctrine of the Christian religion, by that internal evidence, which the Bible, as a book at unity with itself, cannot fail, when properly understood, to furnish for that purpose.

Aware, it should seem, of the decided conclusion to be drawn from that concentrated evidence resulting from the united testimony of Divine Revelation, unbelievers are in the habit of adopting a ready way of disposing of all those parts of Scripture, which are irreconcileable with their systems; by denying their inspiration. With such underminers of the foundation, on which stands all our knowledge of spiritual things, we profess not to reason; because our admission of the current assertion, that truth can never be injured by debate, must be received in this qualified sense; that the method of debate and the subject debated on, are properly suited to each other.

If what the Apostle says, has not lost its authority, "that the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God;" 1 Cor. ii. 11.—the only way of acquiring a knowledge of spiritual things, must be by an attention

attention to what the Spirit of God has revealed. Those who admit the inspiration of the Sacred Writings, to act consistently with that admission, must, in reasoning on spiritual subjects, be governed by this principle. Whilst those who reject it, are not to be reasoned with at all; because they quit the ground, on which alone sound reasoning, in matters of this nature, can possibly be built.

To the Scripture then we must go for information in spiritual things: and the more that Scripture is made the Interpreter of itself, the better reason shall we have to be satisfied, that the information derived from it is correct.

When it is considered, that the prosecution of one divine plan appears to direct the ways of Providence, from the beginning to the end of time; and that the great scheme of Redemption constitutes the chief burden of Revelation, from its first opening in Paradise, to the final testimony vouchsafed to the favourite Apostle; we shall conclude with our Article, that "the Old Testament cannot be contrary to the New;" life having from the beginning been revealed

revealed to man through that promised seed, which has been manifested to the world in " Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."

In this boasted Age of Reason, but declining Age of Faith, it may be expedient therefore to trace from time to time, that wide foundation, on which Christianity has been placed by the different dispensations of Divine Wisdom; that Christian Professors may be convinced, that in preaching the doctrine of the Cross, we bring no strange thing to their ears; but that doctrine which was designed to characterize the Church, through every stage of her militant state on earth; as preparatory to its becoming the endless theme of her triumph in a future state of glory.

This mode of establishing the Faith proceeds on a supposition not to be controverted; namely, that what has been once stamped by the authority of Divine Revelation, must ever be true. Consequently, from the analogy to be traced between the different dispensations of Religion, which at different times have received the sanction of Divine Appointment;

ment; a conviction must be derived to every mind capable of appreciating the force of rational evidence, with respect to the uniform tenor of the *doctrine* meant to be established. Thus, for instance, the marked correspondence between the distinguishing service of the Jewish Temple, and that of the Christian Church, the latter considered as the instituted commemoration of that sacrifice, of which the former was the appointed shadow, furnishes a proof, the most direct and conclusive, in support of Christianity.

For it is obvious to remark, that whatever evidence we have for the Divine Institution of the Levitical service in the Temple, the same, and at least an equal degree of evidence, is to be produced for the establishment of the correspondent service in the Christian Church. And as it is not to be supposed that the Spirit of God would, on a former occasion, set the Divine Seal of Miracles to an Institution which was not his own; so neither is it to be supposed, that in these latter days He would bear the like, and still more circumstantial testimony to such Expounders of it,

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as by ignorant mistakes, or studied falsehoods, had misrepresented its meaning, and thereby perverted its design. Consequently, the Jewish and Christian dispensations, considered as constituting two connected parts of the same Divine Œconomy, must stand or fall together.

In fact, from the fall there has been but one way of Salvation. The only variation which Divine Wisdom has thought proper to adopt, relative to this important subject, respects, not the subject itself; but the manner in which the knowledge of it has been communicated to the world. This has given rise to different Dispensations of Religion, suited to the circumstances of the parties at different periods; whilst the promotion of one essential consideration was the uniform design of each; namely, that of directing the mind of fallen man to the same divine object of Faith and Hope.

This object originally pointed out by the mystic representation in Paradise, was more distinctly marked by the typical service appointed to accompany it. Which service, through its different stages, proved

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the means of keeping up the true Faith, wherever it was kept up; till God, in wisdom thought fit, by the mouth of his Son, to speak a plainer language to the world.

The application, therefore, which our Saviour and his Apostles made of the types of the Old Testament, to their corresponding truths in the New, directly proves, that the Christian Faith was the object of the Jewish dispensation: whilst an attention to the meaning those types were designed to convey, qualifies us to determine on the best authority, what the nature of that Faith is.

Thus the Old and New Testament, by their mutual illustration of each other, furnish that accumulated mass of evidence in support of the characteristic doctrines of the Cross, which cannot fail, when duly appreciated, to bring conviction to the mind of every one, who has not advanced so far in the school of modern infidelity, as to reject the foundation, on which alone all sound reasoning on Christian subjects is built.

But, before we enter on the Subject proposed, it may be of advantage to expose

pose the futility of that specious mode of arguing, which proud reasoners, substituting the light of Nature for that of Revelation, so confidently adopt: by which the inquisitive mind is too apt to be drawn away from that Scriptural path of light, which shines more and more, until the perfect day; into that dark and comfortless one, which, through the perplexing maze of doubt and uncertainty, generally leads to universal scepticism.

When we consider the various opinions which have prevailed, and continue to prevail, on the subject of Religion, it might be expected that we should be at some loss to reconcile them with that uniform consistency, which is one of the most striking characteristics of truth; no less than with the benevolent design which the Deity must have had in view, in revealing that truth to the world. But when we consider man, in his present fallen state, a being perverse in will, and corrupt in understanding; we cease to be surprized at an effect, which must necessarily result from that variety of causes, to which the opinions and practices of men are at different

ferent times to be traced up. A singleness of heart, accompanied with an uncorrupt love of truth for the *truth's sake*, is a perfection rarely to be expected from that general derangement of the human faculties, which was brought about by the fall.

Reason is the gift of God to man: and had it been always employed, as it ought to have been, in the service, and for the honour of the Giver, it would have proved, what it was designed to be, the firmest support of Revelation. But alas! it was in opposition to Revelation, that the first notorious exertion of its powers became distinguished. And the success which the grand Adversary of mankind gained in Paradise, by this original perversion of the human understanding, has encouraged him to a continued repetition of the same flattering temptation.

"Ye shall be as Gods, knowing good and evil," was that confident assurance, which by setting up the reason of man in opposition to the revealed word of his Maker, laid the foundation for infidelity, in all the variegated forms in which it has

since appeared in the world. The progress of this insinuating temptation is uniform. It commences with flattering the pride of human reason; and under the plausible and captivating idea of free inquiry, and liberal discussion, terminates in an absurd and blasphemous attempt, to circumscribe the ways of infinite wisdom, within the narrow limits of a finite understanding.

To this radical source of atheistic folly, are to be traced up those speculations, which in the vaunting language of individuals, are represented as so many laudable efforts of the human mind, to advance the important subject of Religion through different stages of improvement, to its utmost degree of perfection. "In nature, we have been told, we see no bounds to our enquiries. One discovery always gives hints for many more, and brings us into a wider field of speculation. Now why should not this (continues the same writer*) be in some measure the case with respect to knowledge of a moral and religious kind."

* Dr. Priestley. Free Enquiry.

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For the best reason in the world it may be answered; because the subjects are of a very different nature, and productive of very different consequences to the parties concerned in them. The works of Nature and of Art open a wide field for speculation, and were doubtless designed to exercise, and thereby enlarge the faculties of the human mind. Upon these subjects there can be no bound set to enquiry or improvement: because the works of Nature and Art appear to be as infinite, as the extent of man's rational powers is undetermined.

But the work of Grace in the revelation of the divine will to man, is to be seen in a different light. This being designed not so much to exercise the head, as to ameliorate the heart, ought on that account to be independent of the speculations of the party, intended to be reformed by it. The discoveries in Nature and in Art, though calculated to improve the condition of man in this world, both as a rational and a social being, by adding to his information, as well as to his comfort in life,

life, were still left to depend for their advancement, on the exertion of those natural faculties with which God thought fit to furnish him. But the knowledge of Religion, was a subject of too essential importance both to the present and future happiness of man, to be left on such an uncertain footing. The propagation of it therefore became an object of immediate attention to the Deity himself.

As a demonstrative proof of which, that Being who sees the end from the beginning, so orders the ways of men, that the kingdoms of the earth in the eventful pages of their respective history, become subservient in their turns to the promotion of the divine plan. That scheme which had been projected in the councils of Heaven, and partially revealed from time to time, travelled on through several successive stages of advancement, till it arrived at that fullness of time, when from a variety of concurrent circumstances, the world was in some degree prepared, for a more compleat display of Divine Revelation in the personal ministry of the Son of God.

Religion

Religion therefore, considered in itself, as coming from God, must be perfect, and can receive no improvement from the wit of man. We may talk of the progress of arts and sciences; and in this sense the phrase is properly applied: but when we carry the same idea with us into Religion, we are attempting to place subjects under the same point of view, which are as widely separated from each other, as Earth from Heaven.

In compliment to reason, it has been supposed that the increasing light of science must contribute to the advancement of religious knowledge. But this suppotion has certainly not been verified by general experience. So far from it, that superior attainments in human science, instead of bringing men nearer to God, have too frequently proved the means of drawing them further from him. For nothing throws so great a stumbling block in the way of spiritual knowledge as *carnal* wisdom. On this account it doubtless was, that our blessed Saviour spake thus decidedly to his Disciples: " Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom

kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein."

That line of just discrimination necessary to be drawn between the use and abuse of Science, sound judgement on this occasion will not fail to draw. We are aware that Science, truly and properly so called, has in no way or degree injured Religion: and that the most cultivated and improved minds, if so cultivated as to merit the name, are, and in the nature of things must be, the most teachable and humble. Sir *Isaac Newton*, one of the most scientific men that ever lived, was no less exemplarily modest, meek, and unassuming; and studied the Scriptures, if not with compleat success, yet with much meritorious singleness of heart. That worthy disciple of the Newtonian school, the celebrated *Maclaurin*, not only a profound mathematician and philosopher, but also a pious Christian like his master; was one of the most strenuous defenders of Revealed Religion, against that false Science which has brought the name of philosophy into disrepute, and so much contributed to spoil our taste and corrupt our morals.

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It is not therefore to those respected promoters, of that sound and correct knowledge, which is entitled to the name of *true* science, and constitutes the firmest bulwark against atheism; but it is to those vain proficients in *false* science, whose superficial views of Nature do not lead up to Nature's God, who affect to be wise above what is written, that we must be understood to address the observation; that an unpresuming teachableness of disposition, which is the characteristic of childhood, is the best qualification for the reception of Gospel truth; which "casteth down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God; and bringeth into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."

In fact, the mysterious doctrines of the Gospel have nothing to do with our improvements in any human science whatever; as they were originally revealed by God, the same they must continue; objects for faith, not for speculation, to the end of time. "It is very weakly urged, that Religion should keep pace with science in improvement; for nothing can be

more

more absurd than the idea of a progressive Religion; which being founded upon the *declared*, not the *imagined*, will of God; must, if it attempts to proceed, relinquish that Revelation, which is its basis; and so cease to be a Religion founded on God's word. God has revealed himself; and all that he has spoken, and consequently all that is demanded of us to accede to, is declared in one Book; from which nothing is to be retrenched, and to which nothing can be added. All that it contains, was as perspicuous to those who first perused it, as it can be to us now, or as it can be to our posterity in the fiftieth generation."

Free inquiry, if restrained within due bounds, and applied to proper subjects, is a most important privilege of the human mind; and if well conducted, is one of the greatest friends to truth. But when Reason knows neither its office nor its limits; when it is employed on subjects foreign to its jurisdiction; and Revelation itself is as it were called upon to bow down to its usurped authority; it then becomes a privilege dangerous to be exercised: because a want of due respect for the

the mysterious doctrines of Religion, seldom fails to end in a total disbelief of them.

Religion, it is certain, may be corrupted; and as the best of things, it is perhaps most liable so to be. In such case, it becomes necessary that it should be reformed; by being reduced to its original standard. But then every attempt at reformation must tend to some established point; and be governed by some fixed rule of judgement: otherwise a boundless field of speculation being opened on the human mind, theory will follow upon theory, in endless succession, according to the varying sentiments and circumstances of the Church at different periods; till the members of it, with respect to their most important concern, will be left in the hopeless condition described by the Apostle; "ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."

We know that what has been revealed by God must be true, whether we can perfectly comprehend it or not; and this, we may depend upon it, is sufficient for us to know in our present state; otherwise we

should not be circumstanced in this respect, as we are.

Should it be asked, why God has thought fit to reveal any fact, unaccompanied with circumstances calculated to render it comprehensible to the human mind; the answer is obvious; that the probable design of such a Revelation was, that it might become an exercise of faith, and a test of humility; that our understanding, not less than our will, might become obedient to the Divine Word.

The passage in our text, for instance, points out the eternal existence of Jesus Christ the Son of God, and Saviour of the world; that divine Person, "who was and is, and is to come," as an essential branch of the Apostolic Faith; and consequently, a fundamental doctrine of the Christian Church. Now, though the human mind is unable to measure Eternity, or "to search the deep things of God;" nevertheless, what, on the ground of Divine Revelation, was the faith of the church seventeen hundred years ago, must continue to be so still; for the fashion of the world can have nothing to do with a business of this kind.

Religion,

Religion, as deriving its establishment from that Being "with whom is neither variableness nor shadow of turning," is not a thing to be new-modelled every day, in compliance with the varying fancies and never-ending speculations of capricious man; but must be expected to wear the character of its Divine Author, that of being "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."

Those therefore who go out of the common road, running counter, as it were, to what has been hitherto considered as the established faith of the Church, by preaching up a religion stript of all the peculiar doctrines of Christianity, must do it at their own peril. As ministers of Christ, we lament their delusion, and pray for their conversion; that their eyes being opened, they may become wise unto salvation. But with the utmost charity for persons, we are still bound to shew none to errors; one part of our office as, Watchers for souls, being to guard the members of the Christian Church from mistaking poison for wholesome food.

One of the master prejudices of this enlightened

enlightened age is, alas! that all opinions or modes of faith are equally good. That liberality of sentiment, which is misnamed Charity, the offspring of modern philosophy, affects to think well of men's safety in any religion, and even without any; thereby encouraging a sentiment, which at the same time that it prevents all serious enquiry after truth, confirms men in their infidelity.

But however inclined we might be to pay deference to those who stand eminently distinguished by their mental powers, nevertheless in a matter where so much is at stake, no compliment must be paid. If we ourselves really believe, that salvation through the blood of a crucified Saviour, is the only foundation on which the hope of a Christian can be built; whether this essential doctrine be received by others or not, cannot possibly, in such case, be considered by us as a matter of indifference. And it will be but a poor satisfaction to those who are pledged to preach Christ crucified, as "the power of God unto Salvation;" upon casting up the account of their time and talents, to reflect

flect; that they have sacrificed the cause of Salvation to the speculative opinions of any man, however distinguished: by "forsaking the fountain of living water, and having recourse to cisterns which hold no water."

This consideration will strike the more forcibly, on our recollecting, that the wisdom of God has taken care to guard us particularly against that sort of men, who, being considered as lights of this lower world, are, on that account, generally looked up to as directors, in some measure, of public opinion. When the Gospel was preached by the Apostles, we find that neither the wise man, nor the scribe, nor the disputer of this world, were to be found in the number of its hearers. The Doctrine of the Cross was then, what it has continued to be, generally speaking, ever since, "a stumbling block to the Jew, and to the Greek, foolishness."—The wise and prudent of this world, who appear strong in understanding, are sometimes very weak in faith: while the poor and simple have that faculty of the soul, that inestimable talent of a believing heart,

heart, which alone enables man to receive and understand the things of Heaven.

The argument therefore which may be drawn from the opposition of human Science to the revealed doctrine of the Cross, is only one link in that long chain of proof, by which the evidence for the Christian Religion is held together. It is an argument which set out with the Gospel from the beginning of its general publication, has travelled on with it to the present day, and leads to this uniform conclusion; that God will reserve to himself the honour of his own Dispensation. With this view he made choice of the meanest instruments for the effecting his gracious purpose in the propagation of the Gospel; passing by the wise, the mighty, and the noble, he made choice of the "foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and the weak things to confound the mighty;" that the wisdom of the wise of this world being destroyed, and the understanding of the prudent being brought to nought, "no flesh should glory in his presence, but that he that glorieth, might glory in the Lord."

At the same time, whilst thus guarding against

against that vain pretension to science, which affects to look down with contempt on the revealed truths of Religion; we must not be understood as encouraging that dangerous notion so fondly cherished by enthusiasts, that they are more likely to attain salvation than the wise; not because they possess a believing heart, (which certainly does not *necessarily* belong, either to the learned or unlearned, as such,) but because they are *poor* and *simple*; in other words, as understood by them, because they are *ignorant* and *unlearned*. It requires, we presume, no nice discrimination to draw the line between that proud, abstracted, speculative and metaphysical presumption, which vauntingly assumes to itself the dignified name of philosophy; and that not less dangerous extreme of presumptuous ignorance, which foolishly regards all its imaginary feelings and eccentric reveries, as the sure characteristics of a believing heart. Without meaning therefore to depreciate the proper exercise of that most valuable gift, by which God has distinguished his chosen creature; this short but useful lesson may be learned from

from what has been said on this part of our subject; that there is a species of wisdom more to be dreaded by Christians than even folly; and that the smallest portion of true humility is of more estimation in the eye of Heaven, than the most boasted advantages of scientific attainment.

Truth, indeed, at the same time that it wants not beauty, is both plain, simple, and uniform. He that would fix upon it, must be content to think as others do. For truth cannot put on those various modes and shapes, that are suited to the levity of human affections. It cannot start things new and strange to take the multitude, which admires nothing so much as monsters. It cannot give way to the pride of singularity; the love of contradiction; the vanity of leading; or the interest of siding with a sect. All these are the rights and privileges of error. And it would be no difficult matter to make it appear, that of all the errors and heresies that have ever sprung up, to the disturbance of the Christian world, scarce one of them derived its origin from invincible ignorance,

norance and want of light; but from an affectation of superior knowledge and want of humility. From whence it follows, that the surest guard against heresy, is to set a constant watch against the temptations of pride. For pride lies at the bottom of all heresies, as the source from whence they spring.

It would be inconsistent with the brevity allotted to discourses of this nature, to enter at large into a subject of this very extensive kind. Whilst therefore the opposition which the doctrine of the Cross has met with in the world, has, through the disposition of an All-wise Being, made the infidelity of man operate to the more perfect elucidation of divine truth; it may at the same time be observed, that all the arguments employed against it, have only changed the dress which they wore on former occasions; nothing material being now advanced on this subject, for which an answer is not ready prepared in writings, that have long since been before the world.

St. Paul knew, that the prejudiced Jew

and the learned Gentile, took great offence at the doctrine of a crucified Saviour; and he could not but see, that Christianity would be more favourably entertained by both, if that offence was removed; and the Gospel reduced to a scheme of mere morality ratified by Divine Authority; and inforced by stronger assurances of rewards and punishments than had ever been given before. And such is the favourite scheme, which, under the name of Christianity, to which it bears no affinity, is now taken up, and propagated with so much zeal and confidence.

The Unitarian of the present day, (as he is commonly though *improperly* distinguished,) is, in a great measure, what the blind unconverted Jew was in St. Paul's day. He believes in one God. So likewise did the Jew. He has a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. Similar to this was the record which St. Paul bare to the religious character of his countrymen; Rom. x. 2. The Unitarian, upon the ground of a supposed moral perfection, goes about to establish his own righteousness;

ness; and cannot submit himself to the righteousness of God. Such was precisely the case with the unbelieving Jew.

Now if the condition of the Jew under these circumstances had been a safe one; St. Paul's anxiety for the salvation of his countrymen would have been vain; and the continual sorrow which he felt, for the hopeless state of those who knew not Christ, been feeling thrown away; Rom. ix. The Jews were desirous of being saved; but were strangers to the plan on which salvation was to be obtained. Whilst therefore the Apostle gives them some credit for their sincerity, he laments their blindness and delusion. At the same time he faithfully executes his commission towards them, by boldly preaching to them Christ crucified, as "the power of God unto salvation." And all Ministers, who would not basely betray the cause they are professionally bound to maintain, must follow St. Paul's example.

The world has been told, that a good moral life contains the whole sum and substance of the Christian Religion; and a man may do well, nay better without any

acquaintance

acquaintance with the Christian mysteries: that Christianity would recommend itself to more general acceptance, if these mysterious and offensive doctrines, as they are called, did not constitute a part of it: and as a powerful argument in favour of this plan of general conversion, we are told, that if we would succeed with Jews and Mahometans, the stumbling block of Christ's divinity must be moved out of the way*.

What is this but to deceive men with a name, by dressing out a sort of splendid morality, and calling it *Christianity*; and then flattering ourselves that we are making converts to the Christian Religion. Whereas this is in truth, not bringing the Jew and Mahometan *up* to Christianity, by preaching to them those doctrines which constitute the distinguishing characteristics of the Christian Faith; but bringing Christianity *down* to them; by removing every thing out of it, but what we may be supposed to hold in common with them. This plan of extending the Christian communion at the expence of the Christian Faith,

* Dr. Priestley's "Importance of Free Inquiry."

by

by so generalizing our creed, that persons of any persuasion may find no difficulty in subscribing to it, may answer the purpose of enlarging our congregations; but in that case they will be congregations of unbelievers, rather than what they were designed to be.

Had the Christian Religion been of this very comprehensive nature, or had the first preachers of it thought fit to have adopted such easy and conciliatory measures, for the sake of making converts to it; instead of preaching up the Faith as it is in Christ Jesus; the history of the Church would have presented us with a very different scene from what it does at present; and the Apostles and Martyrs might have died natural deaths.

But they who reason thus, are surely unacquainted with the nature of the Christian Dispensation; which represents faith and practice as connected with each other; the former considered as the root, from which the latter, as the branch, derives its support. "I am the vine, (said Christ to his disciples,) ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth

bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." Practical holiness, on a right principle, is the genuine fruit of Christianity: consequently it can thrive only, in proportion as the doctrines of Christianity are received in the world. None but fools look for grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles. None but those who are "spoiled through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ," expect to gather the fruit of Christianity from the stock of heathenism.

The world has been told moreover "that the only essential article of its religion is the doctrine of the Resurrection from the dead." In conformity with which idea, it has been said, that "should there be found a man, who really believes in a future life of retribution, and governs his conduct by that faith, so as to be as perfect a character as a Christian; to *him* Christianity would be superfluous. What is all Religion, continues the same paradoxical writer, * but a means to a certain end:

* Dr. Priestley's "Importance of Free Inquiry."

end? and if any man can in fact attain to this end, to lead a godly, righteous, and sober life without Christianity, (which has this very thing for its great object;) he is as good a man, and as valuable a character as any person who attains the same by the help of it."

To such an hypothetical argument, scarce to have been expected from one who had ever lived in a Christian country, it may suffice to answer; that could fallen man have led a godly, righteous, and sober life, independent of the grace vouchsafed to him under the Christian dispensation; in a word, could he have done as well without Christianity as with it; we may venture to say, that Christianity would never have been heard of in the world: no axiom in science being more incontrovertible, than that an All-wise Being cannot do any thing in vain. The very introduction therefore of Christianity into the world proves both the impropriety and absurdity of such a mode of reasoning. At least, it may be said, that till this boasted character is found out, who may fairly be supposed to have led a godly, righteous,

righteous, and sober life, without the advantages of Christianity, it is unnecessary to place this subject in a point of view, which by confounding two characters, in their nature so distinct as that of the *moral* man and the *Christian*, seems calculated to answer no other purpose than that of deceiving the unwary.

Had man been in a different condition from what he is, doubtless the dispensations of Divine Providence towards him would have been different from what they are. Could he, for instance, have justified himself in the eyes of God, on the ground of his own righteousness; in other words, could he, by any works of his own, have saved himself; we should have heard nothing of the expedient provided for his salvation, by the sacrifice of a crucified Saviour; for in such case that Saviour had died in vain. But man, it is to be remembered, is not what he originally was; but in a fallen condition, with a law in his members warring against the law in his mind, and continually bringing him into captivity to the law of sin. Every man, who knows any thing of human nature, feels

feels the truth of this statement; and considers the perfect man, independent of Divine Grace, as an imaginary sort of creature; existing no where but in the heads of those, who neither know Christ nor themselves.

Our Saviour tells us, that " when we have done all things that we are commanded, (supposing that to be possible) we are unprofitable servants." St. James reminds us, " that in many things we offend all." St. Paul says, in still stronger language, " that there is none righteous, no not one." And to remove all vain ground of confidence at once out of our way, we are told in plain terms by the Psalmist, " that in the sight of God no man living shall be justified."

Here then is that critical case which called for divine interpositon. A world lying in wickedness, sold under sin, and universally guilty before God, was to be redeemed to eternal life. The Apostle tells us " that the wages of sin is death." Rom. vi. 23. And that " without shedding of blood there is no remission." Heb. ix. 22. At the same time he says, in reference to the sacrifices under the law, that " it is not possible

possible for the blood of bulls and of goats to take away sin." Heb. x. 4. From whence the obvious conclusion is, that, in the divine councils, blood of some kind was intended to be effectual to this purpose. In conformity to which gracious intention, when our Blessed Saviour instituted the representative memorials of his body and blood; on taking up the cup, he said "This is my blood, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." Matt. xxvi. 28.

Here, then, is that mystery of godliness, which angels, we are told, desire to look into: namely, "God in Christ reconciling the world unto himself; not imputing their trespasses unto them: having made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." 2 Cor. v. 19. 21.

Was I therefore called upon to point out the peculiar and distinguishing doctrine of the Gospel; it should not be that of the Resurrection from the dead; (though this must be allowed to be an essential one;) but that most important and interesting of all other doctrines, which pro-

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claims Salvation to fallen man through the blood of a crucified Saviour.

For what is the doctrine of most importance to man in his religious concerns? Doubtless, it is that of his redemption from sin and sorrow, from death and hell; to righteousness and joy, to immortality and glory. The resurrection from the dead would be but an uncomfortable doctrine, unaccompanied with an assurance relative to our condition in another state. It is not sufficient to know, that this life ended, we shall live again; unless we also know that our Redeemer liveth; and that where he is, there we shall be also; provided we believe in him as we ought. It is not enough to know, that we shall, in the end, triumph over death and the grave; unless we also know, that the sting of death, which is sin, is taken away; and that those who die in Jesus, shall rise in him to glory. It is this comfortable consideration which makes us join in gratitude with the Apostle, in giving thanks to God, which giveth us the victory over the grand enemy of our salvation, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

In

prevent our being surprized at its continuance, we are plainly told, that there must be heresies; and the reason given for them is, " that they which are approved may be made manifest."

That we may not, therefore, be deceived by appearances in matters of this nature, the following consideration ought always to be kept alive in our minds; that sincerity in profession furnishes an argument only in favour of the earnestness of the professor; not of the truth of the opinion professed. It proves no more in fact, than that the party really means what he professes. But as zeal is not always accompanied with knowledge, this sincerity may consist with a *wrong* as well as with a *right* opinion; and consequently no conclusion can be drawn from it, in confirmation of either. A man, for instance, may believe his own lie, with the same confidence that another believes the truth: and the Scripture tells us, that " there is a way which seemeth right to a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."

Should, however, the error of those who vainly

vainly think they can do without a Saviour, tend to confirm our faith in Him, by making us better acquainted with the ground on which that Faith is built; good in such case will be brought out of evil; and we have only to take heed that it be not thrown away upon us. Whilst we are watchfully guarding against the deception of others, it is possible that we may still deceive ourselves. Christian Faith, it is to be remembered, furnishes the most powerful motives to Christian practice. For what principles shall we suppose capable of working on the ingenuous mind, if love and gratitude do not? The doctrine of the Cross, therefore, considered in this point of view, is the most important doctrine, because the most calculated to produce effect on the human mind, that was ever preached. And if whilst engaged, as Christians ought frequently to be, in the contemplation of the stupendous work of Redemption, we can neglect to show forth in our lives the praise of the Redeemer; by giving up ourselves to his service, and by walking before him in holiness and righteous-

righteousness; we are of all others most unworthy to be saved by him.

But whoever believes sincerely, will seldom fail to practise conscientiously: for these two things, like cause and effect, do *generally*, though not *necessarily* accompany each other.

We may, indeed, deceive ourselves with a name: we may call ourselves Christians: and in some respects manifest a zeal for our profession; whilst at the same time "we hold the truth in unrighteousness:" but it is the faith working by love, and producing such a transformation in our life and manners, which no other principle has power to do, that can alone entitle us to the benefit of the Gospel covenant. "A mind that is conformed to this world, and given up to its pleasures, though it repeat the creed without questioning a single article of it, will be abhorred in the sight of God, as a vessel unfit for the master's use, because *unprepared* to stand in the most holy place."

"Without faith, we know, it is impossible to please God."—But by faith is not

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to be understood a barren assent to the evidence of the Gospel, unaccompanied with its corresponding effects; but a term of enlarged signification, comprehensive of the whole extent of Christian obligation. It is not enough to believe that Jesus was that Lamb without spot, who offered up his life to reconcile the justice and mercy of an offended God; that man, through Him, might be saved; unless our lives are so ordered, as to correspond with another very important object Christ had in view on coming into the world; namely, "to purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

Whilst therefore the pride and prejudice of the human understanding must be sacrificed to the irresistible evidence of Divine Revelation; the corruption of the heart must be equally sacrificed to the purity of the Divine precepts. Man must be made holy, in order that he may be qualified to be made happy. And in his continued endeavour after that holiness, which constitutes the ground both of his present and future happiness, consists that

spiritual warfare; in which the Christian is constantly engaged with the enemies of his Salvation; and from whom he must not hope to be completely delivered, till "Death shall be swallowed up in victory."

DISCOURSE

DISCOURSE II.

HEB. XIII. 8.

Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

TO ascertain by competent authority the gracious plan, on which a fallen creature may be restored to his lost inheritance of a blissful immortality; by regularly marking the progress, by which divine wisdom has gradually unfolded that plan to the world; must be admitted to be the most important employment of the human understanding. Every other subject, which may from time to time occupy the mind, however useful in itself, however advantageous to society, when compared with this, the most beneficent, the most sublime that imagination can suggest, sinks into insignificance.

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With respect to what is called *natural Religion*, the case is different. For natural Religion (should we admit that there is such a thing,) being supposed to be born with us, renders consequently all seeking beyond ourselves, for the origin and progress of it unnecessary. Hence it may be, that this idol of the imagination has been so often set up and worshipped; because the pride of man is flattered by the consideration of its existence being derived, from what has been generally, though improperly, called the *natural* powers of the human mind.

But Christianity is to be seen in a very different light. The particulars of it, which are many and wonderful, are not only foreign to our nature, but could never have been known, had they not been communicated to us from some quarter, and by some means exterior to ourselves. Hence they become a proper subject for examination to all, who have that regard for the Christian Religion, which the importance of it demands. As a person who finds himself in possession of a good estate, will not only think it necessary to know the extent

tent and profits of it; but will also wish to learn at what time, and by what conveyance it came first to his ancestors; and through what intermediate steps, the succession to it has devolved on him; so is the case (to compare great things with small) with regard to the benefits of Christianity; which, by those who have a just sense of them, will always be esteemed the most valuable possession: a possession not acquired by our own industry, or for which we stand indebted to the virtue or industry of our ancestors; but a possession derived originally from its Divine Author; and conveyed down to us by ways and means of that Author's appointment; and under the direction of his providential care. To make ourselves therefore acquainted with the particulars of it, must constitute a most interesting employment: particulars which, if not absolutely necessary to be universally known, cannot fail to strengthen the confidence of the parties to whom they are known, in their title to the inheritance in question.

The words of the text may be taken in two senses; but senses which have a close

connection

connection with each other: either as they refer to the transcendent dignity of our Blessed Lord's Person; or to the uniform tendency of his Doctrine. In both these senses it may be properly said, that "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."

It is my present purpose to confine myself to the latter of these senses; considered as containing the following position; That the doctrine of Salvation through Christ was, and is, and always will be the same, independent of the imaginations of wayward and sinful men.

"Known unto God are all his works from the beginning."—They are known unto man, only so far as that God has been pleased to reveal them; and to furnish him with a capacity to understand them. But this Revelation being derived from a divine origin, must be uniform and consistent: because that Being "who seeth the end from the beginning;" "who hath shewed the former things what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; and hath declared things to come;" cannot possibly contradict

dict himself. The time is coming, when a review of all those parts of Revelation which relate to the office of the promised Messiah in the Old Testament, compared with the acts of Jesus, recorded in the New, will prove to the confusion of every species of infidelity, that in Christ they have all been punctually fulfilled: when in consequence of the veil of type and prophecy, which for wise reasons has been thrown over the Scriptures, being removed, it will be clearly seen, that ever since the Church had a being in the world, Christ was the teacher of it, and the object of Faith to its members; and that on this account He is called "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." That in fact He is the sum and substance of both Testaments; which do not differ from each other with regard to Him, considered as the principal subject of both, but with regard to the manner of his being exhibited under each. Under the Old Testament, by Sacraments and visible signs which pointed to Him as yet to come; under the New Testament, by such as commemorate and declare him already come. Hence it

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is that the Law, when taken in its just extent, is called *spiritual*, because including Christ; but, when taken in the sense of unbelieving Jews, exclusive of Him as the completion of it; not as a "shadow of good things to come," but an ordinance of self-sufficient virtue; it is termed "the Law of a carnal Commandment, the Letter that killeth." Hence it is that the Christian Fathers contend, that the Gospel, as to the substance of it, is more ancient than the Law,* and that all the holy men of old, were saved by virtue of it. And hence the Gospel is so often spoken of, not as the forming of a new design, but as the completion, or filling up of an old one. "Think not, said Christ, that I am come to destroy the Law or the Prophets; I am not come to destroy but to fulfil." Matt. v. 17.—The Law therefore is the Gospel typified and foretold; the Gospel is the Law fulfilled and perfected; and destroys the Law in no other sense, than the infant is destroyed by his arrival at manhood, or

* See Euseb: Demonstr. Evang. Lib. i.—Hieron. in Gal. v.—et Ephes. iii.

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the faint shining of the rising Sun is done away by his meridian splendour.

Till then that blessed time shall arrive, when the mystery, which was kept hid from ages and generations, but is now made manifest in Christ, shall be compleatly revealed; it is our duty to make the best use of the light that has been afforded; which, though not sufficient to bring divine things before us as it were face to face, will yet be found abundantly so, for the purpose for which it has been vouchsafed; namely, the establishment of our Faith, and the preparation of our thoughts for that more perfect manifestation of divine wisdom, the admiration of which will constitute a principal part of our employment in a better world.

Our Saviour's direction to the Jews, who would not come to him, was; that they should search the Scriptures for information respecting his character. The *internal* evidence which the Scriptures of the Old Testament bear to the character of the promised Messiah is so uniform and striking, that the general way adopted by modern unbelievers to get rid of it, has been, to set

set aside the *external*; by denying either the authenticity, or the inspiration of the records appealed to.

But the Jews were not arrived at this advanced stage of infidelity. Our Saviour's appeal to the Scriptures, was to them an appeal to acknowledged authority; to the result of which they were consequently bound to submit. "Search the Scriptures, (said Christ to them) for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."—John v. 39.

If the Jews thought they had eternal life in their Scriptures, it must have been from their understanding those Scriptures in their *spiritual* sense; in that prophetic and typical sense, in which they respected the Messiah and his kingdom; for in *this sense* only is the hope of eternal life to be drawn from them. And that the bearing testimony to the Messiah was one principal object these writings had in view, is to be fairly concluded from the frequent appeals made to them by our Saviour for that purpose; particularly at a very important period of his ministry, when, for the conviction of his doubting, and as yet

uninformed

uninformed Disciples, and with the view, doubtless of qualifying them for the discharge of their future mission; beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, he expounded to them in all the Scriptures, the things concerning himself." Luke xxiv. 27.

The Scriptures of the Old Testament then furnish evidence in favor of Christianity, adequate to the conviction of every faithful and competent enquirer. This evidence, whether derived through the medium of type or prophecy, those general channels through which the plans of divine wisdom, relative to the office and kingdom of the Messiah, have been conveyed to the world, bears decided testimony to the divinity of its origin. For the typical representation of a future event, and the prophetical description of it, though differing from each other in the mode of conveying the information intended, bear equal testimony to the foreknowledge of the party, who adopts them. In both cases the character of that Divine Being, who "seeth the end from the beginning" is equally demonstrated.

But though the object in view, in both cases

cases be the same, namely, the conveying to the world, from time to time, that information on the great subject of Redemption, necessary to the actual condition of the parties concerned in it; yet the mediums that have been generally employed for the purpose, furnish evidence of a somewhat different kind.

Prophecy, as it is elegantly described by an Apostle, is "a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn."—2 Pet. i. 19. It was wisely ordained that it should be so; because it was not designed so much to give information to the party to whom it was originally delivered; as to furnish conviction to those who should live to see the prediction substantiated by the event. The declared use of prophecy, therefore, being subsequent to the facts which it adumbrates, the obscurity intervening between the prediction and its correspondent event, is a circumstance that necessarily belongs to the nature of the subject.

Whereas, a type is a sort of evidence *for the time present;* its purpose being to illustrate the subject which it is designed

to

to pre-figure; for the purpose of preparing the mind for its reception, when the time should arrive for its introduction. In one case, that light which leadeth to knowledge is thrown, from the event back to the prediction: in the other, it is thrown forward, from the type to the subject pre-figured. In both cases, we are furnished with conviction on the cause, to which they have been made subservient; from the consideration, that all God's Dispensations, relative to the Redemption of man, are so connected, as to form one complete harmonious system: such a system as was to be expected from its Divine Author, because it bears unequivocal evidence to the character of that Being, " to whom are known all his works from the beginning." Acts xv. 18.

When we consider the great purpose for which the Messiah came into the world; no less than that of redeeming the inhabitants of it from the curse and consequences of the fall, and restoring them, by the purification of their nature, to a capacity for eternal glory: when we consider, moreover, the dignity of that Person

son, who undertook this gracious office, as he is described in Scripture, under those super-angelic titles of the *word and wisdom of God*, "the eternal Son of the Father;" "the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person:" we shall readily conclude, that the sublimity of the purpose, together with the dignity of the Person engaged in it, constituted the fittest subject for the manifestation of Divine Providence in the œconomy of human affairs, as ministerial to the accomplishment of that great scheme, for which the Lamb of God had, in the divine councils, been slain from the foundation of the world.

But as the accomplishment of this great scheme was to be gradual and progressive, the Letter of Prophecy attendant upon it, and bearing decided testimony to the directing power of the Supreme Disposer of events, must be suited to the nature of the Divine Dispensation; furnishing only that degree of evidence from time to time, which might best correspond with God's general design, in the revelation of his plan to the world. In proportion then as the

the scheme of Christianity draws towards its final accomplishment at the consummation of all things, the evidence from prophecy will proportionably increase in strength; in consequence of the various lights reflected from various prophecies meeting together in one luminous Centre; for the purpose probably of counteracting, as far as may be, the grossness of that spiritual darkness, which, we are given to understand, shall overshadow the world in its last days.

Still, when it is considered that the Messiah was, in the most exalted sense of the words, to be a blessing unto all nations; and that the great scheme of Redemption had its commencement from the foundation of the world; we shall form but an inadequate judgement of the divine wisdom and goodness, if we hesitate to conclude, that an attestation suited to the different stages of the Divine Dispensation, for the purpose of conducting mankind to that truth in the fulness of time to be revealed, was uniformly and regularly vouchsafed.

To this end the types exhibited under the

the patriarchal and Jewish Dispensation, were designed to minister. They were pictures drawn by the hand of a Master, delineative of some future Original: patterns or shadows, sketched with a greater or less degree of precision, of some future reality; calculated to prepare and predispose the parties, for whose use they were appointed, for the acknowledgement of the Object to which they referred. And as their principal reference was to the character and office of that Divine Person, who was to be the true propitiatory Sacrifice for Sin, that "Lamb of God without spot or blemish," who was to be manifested in the last days; a proper acquaintance with them will be found to furnish an evidence, in support of the uniform doctrine of Christianity as strong, as prophecy, which relates chiefly to the fortunes of Christ's Church in the world, can furnish, in support of its Divine Establishment. For Type and Prophecy, however the nature of their evidence may differ, are in this respect agreed; that "the Testimony of Jesus is the spirit of both."

What our Saviour said of the one, may therefore

therefore with little variation and equal truth be said of the other. "These things have I told you before I came, that when they come to pass, ye may believe that I am *He.*"—He might have added in reference to the types of the Old Testament, as pre-figurative of the truths contained in the New; these things have I shewed you before, that when they were accomplished in me, ye might believe that I was *He*, who should come into the world.

That such was the principal design of the typical or emblematic service of the Law, we have the most decided authority to determine. Our Saviour in his discourse to his Disciples, previous to his Assumption, told them plainly, that "all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning him." Luke xxiv. 44.

The Law of Moses then wrote of Jesus Christ. But it did not write of Him *literally*; for there is no *personal* mention made of Him throughout the Law. What was written therefore of Christ in the Law,

was written in the figurative language of the times; in conformity with which, the office of the promised Messiah was described under certain appropriate emblems; the design of which was to keep alive the hope, and direct the faith of the parties, "who were kept under the Law, and shut up unto the faith, which should hereafter be revealed." Gal. iii. 23.

The types and ceremonies of the Law exhibited the outlines of that character which Jesus Christ was to fill up; and in this sense the Law is called by the Apostle, "the Shadow of good things to come;" a Figure for the time present; a Schoolmaster to bring those who lived under it to Christ. Now the office of a schoolmaster is to teach. The Lesson then which the Law, as a *Schoolmaster*, was calculated to teach, must have been designed for the use of them to whom the Law was given; otherwise the Law appears to have been, to say the least of it, an useless institution. For when Christ came in person, the use of the Law, *as a Schoolmaster*, was in a great measure superseded. The Lesson which it was originally designed to teach,

teach, ought then to have been learnt; and ready to be reduced to practice; in the welcome reception of Him, who was the Perfection of the Law, and the Consummation of the Gospel. It was in reference therefore to this want of proper application of the Law, as well as of the Prophets to him, in whom they were fulfilled, that our Saviour thus upbraids his Disciples: " O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the Prophets have spoken. *Ought* not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And, beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, he expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself."— And he said unto them, " these are the things which I speak unto you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms concerning me." Luke xxiv.

The Law as a shadow was to remain in quiet possession, till the substance came to thrust it out. When the typical parts of it had been fulfilled by the death and sacrifice of Christ, the office of the Law,

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as a schoolmaster to teach, was to be superseded by the practical application of the lesson taught.

That slowness of heart to believe, which the Jewish nation manifested at the coming of the Messiah in the flesh, might be attributed to various causes: but the charge of *folly* brought against them by our Saviour alluded, it is probable, to their want of understanding the lesson which their Law in particular was expressly designed to teach them. As if he had said; from a comparison of the services of your Law with what has been fulfilled in my character and office, you should have known, that all things that have been brought to pass, *ought necessarily* to have taken place. For it is not to be supposed that our Saviour would have called the Jews fools, for not understanding what was not in itself to be understood. The Law therefore was calculated to convey a lesson of information to those who lived under it, relative to the character and office of Jesus Christ; which those few, who, at our Saviour's appearance in the flesh, still saw the Law in its proper light,

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and by looking through it to Christ, "waited for the consolation of Israel;" were wise enough to understand.

That this was the happy condition of some, even amid the general blindness of the Jewish nation, we have recorded proof, in the characters of Zachariah and Elizabeth, of Mary, of good old Simeon, and Anna the Prophetess; who all in different ways bore testimony to Jesus, as to the looked-for Redeemer of his people. A more striking and more decided testimony to the character and office of the Saviour of the world, than that which was borne by the devout Simeon, to whom "it had been revealed by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, till he had seen the Lord's Christ," is no where to be met with in Sacred Writ. When, on coming (as we read) "by the Spirit into the temple, he took the Child Jesus up in his arms, and, blessing God, said;—Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace. For mine eyes have seen thy salvation; which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people. A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." Luke ii. 29.

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And it was on the ground of the information that was to be derived from the Law, that John the Baptist, whose immediate office it was to prepare the way of the Lord, on seeing Jesus coming towards him, addressed himself to the standers bye in language expressly calculated to lead them to the obvious application of it: "Behold, says he, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world." As if he had said; behold the completion of the Law. Behold the typical Lamb, which, according to the Mosaic Ritual, you have been accustomed to offer up, realized in the person of the Son of God; that Lamb without blemish and without spot, which was devoted from the foundation of the world.

That this language was at the time understood, there is reason to conclude, from what immediately followed. For it is recorded by the same Evangelist, that "one of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew; who, upon finding his brother Simon, saith unto him; We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ." John i. 40.

And on the day following this event, an observation

observation to the same effect, though still more particular, was made by Philip, another of our Saviour's disciples; who on finding Nathaniel, saith unto him, "We have found *Him*, of whom Moses in the Law, and the Prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth." John i. 45.

The Law of Moses then had its appropriate signification. And it ought to have been understood; because it was written in that language, to which the world had been long accustomed; which was in fact as old as Adam; that language of signs, shadows, and figures, of visible things, of which God had been pleased to make use, in the communication of the divine scheme of Redemption to man. For Sacrifice, as the Type of the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world, had been in use from the beginning: and there was scarce a ceremony in the Mosaic Ritual, which is not to be traced to an higher origin. And although, as it was to be expected, when we consider the length of time from Adam to Moses, corruption and abuse might have rendered some additions necessary to be made to the original established

blished Ritual of Religion; still the object of every appointed Ritual, whether in a more simple or complicated state, being to preserve a representative memorial of that covenanted Redemption, to which fallen man was to look for Salvation; it follows, that the Service of the Church was for sum and substance the same from Adam to Christ. And if the Service of the Church from Adam to Christ was the same, the Doctrine of it cannot be different; for the Service comprehended the Doctrine, and was designed to preserve it. Hence it is, that with reference to his Religion it may be said, " Jesus Christ, is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."

In the language of the seventh Article of our Church; " The Old Testament is not contrary to the New: for both in the Old and New Testament everlasting life is offered to mankind by Christ, who is the only Mediator between God and man, being both God and man. Wherefore they are not to be heard which feign, that the Old Fathers did look only for transitory promises."—That promise which related to eternal life through the blood of a Redeemer

deemer, the performance of which Adam, Abraham, and Moses, in their Sacrifices *pre-figured*, we Christians in the Sacrifice of our Altar *commemorate*, as having been actually accomplished on the Cross. The sacrifices before and since the coming of Christ differ in their kind, but agree in the object to which they refer. In both cases the eye of faith brings to sight, what the eye of sense does not discern.

The Jewish nation then, if regarded according to the important station, which they were destined to fill in the œconomy of Divine Grace, may be considered as a light set up for general illumination. "To them, says the Apostle, were committed the oracles of God." Rom. iii. 2. And they were committed to them for this gracious purpose; that, through the medium of that Dispensation, of which they were the appointed conductors, the light of divine truth being by degrees carried forth into the world, mankind might become prepared for the reception of that Sun of Righteousness, who was in the fulness of time to shine forth. "The Law (says one of the Old Fathers,) was not for the Jews only, nor

nor were the Prophets sent for them alone; but this nation was the sacred school of the whole world, from whence they were to fetch the knowledge of God, and the way of spiritual living."—And to knowledge originally derived from this sacred fountain, but grossly perverted by the devil, are all the corruptions of idolatry, which, according to the imaginations of mankind at different times, have disgraced the world, to be traced up.

The Law delivered to the Jews contained the rudiments of the Gospel, and was designed to make them, and all who communicated with them, thorough proficients in the great doctrine of vicarious sacrifice for sin, and the necessity there was for man's looking beyond himself for a meritorious title to salvation. For which reason the Jew became the proper channel of communication, through which the full Revelation of the Gospel should pass to the Gentile. Because, being possessed, in the figurative service of the law, of the shadow of the good things to come: he was thereby qualified to judge of the resemblance which the reality bore to it.

Long

Long accustomed to the emblematic representation of the great doctrine of Atonement in the service of the Temple, he was not only qualified to judge of the nature of the Messiah's office, as the great High-Priest of our salvation, but to ascertain the reality of his character and pretensions, by an appeal to those Records, of which he was the appointed Guardian. For this reason it probably was, that the Gospel went forth first from Jerusalem, as from the seat of the divine oracles, that it might be proclaimed with authority and irresistible evidence among the rest of the nations It being the design of divine wisdom, that the Jew should be, as it were, the connecting medium between the Law and the Gospel; whose office it was to verify the one, by an appeal to the other, and thus establish the conviction of the Gentile on the uniform consistency of the divine plan. The Jew had in his possession the evidence, by which his own faith ought to have been established, and by which the conversion of the Gentile was to be effected. A consideration which accounts for the frequent appeals made both by our Saviour and his Apostles,

Apostles, to the Law and the Prophets, as bearing that decided testimony to the character and office of Jesus Christ which was calculated to remove every stumbling block out of the way of the Gospel.

To this end, the Law and the Prophets ought to have been employed by those guardians, to whom, for that purpose, they had been committed. And it was not till after the Jewish nation had deliberately rejected the council of God in their favour, by first crucifying the Lord of Life, and afterwards opposing the propagation of his Gospel; that the Apostles turned themselves to the Gentiles. " For so had the Lord commanded them."

The defence, therefore, which St. Paul set up before Agrippa against the accusation brought by the Jews, was most pertinent in its direct application to his accusers. " I continue (said he) in the city, witnessing both to small and great;" but the witness I bear, is of a nature that my accusers, *as disciples of Moses*, are bound to receive; for I say " none other things than those which the Prophets and Moses did say should come. That Christ should

suffer

suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles." Acts xxvi. 22, 23.

If then, as St. Paul affirms, Moses preached Christ crucified, as the great sacrifice for sin; those to whom he preached, so long as the spiritual meaning of the Mosaic writings was kept in sight, must have known, that no other sacrifice could be accepted as an atonement for sin, and consequently, that the benefit which the faithful worshipper received from every other sacrifice, was derived from its relation to that Great Original, which it was appointed to represent.

The blindness of the Jew at the time of our Saviour's appearance, though it counteracted the effect, could not take away the design of the Mosaic institution. The design of the Ritual Law confessedly was, to pre-figure the actual accomplishment of the covenanted plan of Redemption in Christ. The Gospel, therefore, which signifies the good news of Salvation to fallen man, through the promised Redeemer, was preached to the Jews under their Dispensation,

pensation, as well as it is to us, though in a different manner. And the reason why, at the coming of Christ, it did not profit them, was, as the Apostle has observed, because "it was not mixed up with faith in them that heard it." Heb. iv. 2.

To render the Law, therefore, instrumental to the purpose for which it had been instituted, it became necessary only to place it before them in its proper light; by representing the sacrifices of it to be, not what they *then* considered them, real and original atonements, but pre-figurative emblems of that great atonement, which was in the fulness of time to be made. This point being admitted, the types of the Law instituted to keep up the true faith in the world, in their application, furnished the most decisive argument against Jewish infidelity. For if the Law (as the Apostle informs us) made nothing perfect, and was designed only to be the introducer of a better hope; and if, (as our Saviour expressly declared) Moses in the Law wrote of *him;* the sacrifices of the Law, pre-figured that of the Cross; the proof, consequently, that the typical service of sacrifice,

crifice, had actually been realized in the
:rson and office of Jesus Christ, drew
ter it a conclusion, which nothing but
lful blindness could resist.

Such was the nature of the proof, which
e Apostle detailed to his Jewish Brethren
his Epistle to the Hebrews; which, by
ting the two counterparts of the Jewish
ıd Christian Dispensation to each other,
bringing together the corresponding
'cumstances of each, furnished, from the
ırked consistency of the divine plan
Redemption, the most convincing evi-
nce in favour of Christianity. An evi-
nce designed to lead to the important
nclusion here drawn from the words of
e text; that "Jesus Christ is the same
sterday, to-day, and for ever."—In other
ırds, that Salvation through Christ, con
tuted the fundamental article in the
eed of the *faithful* under every Dispen-
:ion; and consequently, that the Old
d New Testament form but two parts of
e same uniform, and consistent scheme
Salvation. A conclusion, which the
ıostle corroborates in the eleventh chap-
of this Epistle, by the examples of
those

those Worthies, who had, in different ages of the Church, borne witness to the truth. "All of whom (says he) died in *faith*, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them; and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims upon earth;" thereby declaring plainly that they seek a country; that is, "*an heavenly*." Heb. xi. 13.

Now, as there is but *one faith*, founded on the promises of God to man, through Jesus Christ, it obviously follows; that these Worthies, to make use of the language of our Homilies, looked "for all the benefits of God the Father, through the merits of his Son Jesus Christ." Their faith was consequently a *Christian Faith*. And, "*therefore* (concludes the Apostle) God is not ashamed to be called *their God*, for He hath prepared for them a city." Heb. xi. 16.

DISCOURSE

DISCOURSE III.

HEB. XIII. 8.

Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

"THE nature of man being the same now as from the beginning of the world, and the nature of God being unchangeable; it must follow that the great object of the Dispensations of God must be the same in every age; though the form and manner after which that object is pursued may be different: so that what God spake in former times to the Fathers by the Prophets, will be found the same in sense and effect, with what he spake in the last days by his Son: though he spoke in divers manners, as occasion might require, at sundry times."

Such was the inference meant to be drawn in a former Discourse, from the words of the text; considered as containing the following important position; That the doctrine of Salvation through Christ, was, and is, and always will be the same, independent of the imaginations of wayward and sinful men.

That, as God is a Being "with whom is neither variableness nor shadow of turning;" as all his works are known unto him from the beginning; and can be known unto man only so far as He has been pleased to reveal them; it follows, that the Revelation which has been vouchsafed for that purpose, must necessarily be uniform and consistent.

When indeed it is considered, that the great scheme of human redemption engaged the divine councils before the world began; that the three Great Ones in the Godhead, each made himself a Party in the execution of it; and that this great scheme, commencing with the Fall, was to travel on through all the successive changes in the world, to its consummation at Christ's second coming in Glory; it

it is but to be expected that a scheme, in which both Heaven and Earth, appear so deeply interested, should constitute the chief subject of Revelation; that its History should be coeval with that of the Globe itself, should run through every stage of its existence, and outlast its utmost duration.

With this idea before us, we shall readily conclude, that the mode which divine wisdom made choice of from time to time, for the purpose of keeping alive in the world the hope of the promised Redeemer, was the mode best suited to the circumstances of the age, and the condition of the parties, for whose use it was employed.

In this important point of view we have endeavoured to place the typical service of the Law; as a Divine Institution, designed to be preparatory to a more perfect Dispensation, and, in the most prominent feature of it, to be expressly pre-figurative of that great sacrifice of the Cross, which constituted the completion of the Divine Covenant in favour of fallen man.

But in so doing, we do not mean to countenance

countenance that licentious interpretation of Scripture, which some of the Old Fathers of the Church inadvertently gave into; by which, with the help of forced and unnatural Types, the Sacred Writings were made to mean every thing they were supposed capable of signifying; instead of that alone which they were designed to signify.

Neither Types nor Prophecies were intended to open a field for the airy excursions of a fanciful imagination; but for the sober exercise of a sound and rational understanding; in the application of them to those particular subjects, to the illustration and evidence of which they were severally, though in different ways, designed to minister.

Our rule of judgement therefore in this case must be regulated by the standard set up for it in Scripture; which directs us not to reject all typical illustration, on account of the extreme to which it has been occasionally carried; but to confine the use of it within those bounds, which appear to have been drawn out for it by its Divine Author. In such case, whilst we steer

steer clear of imaginary allusions, which, by making the Scriptures subservient to the irregular flights of human fancy, tend to destroy the substance of all sound Divinity; we shall have more time to examine and appreciate the propriety and striking particularity of those Types; which, having received the sanction of divine wisdom; must, the better they are understood; in consequence of the correspondence between the Figure and the Reality being exactly traced out; contribute more powerfully to the establishment of that cause, to which they were originally designed to minister.

Imaginary types necessarily lead to imaginary interpretations; which seldom fail, more or less, to divert the mind from the proper subject of religious investigation. Whereas *real* types have that appropriate signification annexed to them, which, when properly understood, must lead to a decisive and unambiguous conclusion. The very name of Types implies a resemblance to the thing typified. But then it is not every sort of resemblance, that is sufficient to constitute a type; but such a similitude

tude as is to be found between the Picture and the Original; which proves it to be a designed, though imperfect likeness to the Anti-type. As Pictures then, types must refer to their proper Originals; for the purpose of conveying their intended meaning; they could not otherwise have been made a ground of accusation against the unbelieving Jews; much less could they have furnished the most powerful argument for their reception of Christianity.

In this light they were considered both by our Saviour and his Apostles; whose reasoning with the Jews on the subject of their promised Messiah chiefly turned, on the spiritual application of their own Scriptures. In adopting that typical mode of reasoning, which was the consequence of applying the Law to the elucidation of the Gospel; they considered themselves to be proceeding on known and established ground; and had not the corruption of the heart in this case prevented the proper exercise of the understanding, acknowledged premisses would not have failed to have led the parties, to whom that mode

of reasoning was addressed, to the intended conclusion. For the Law, to answer to the character given of it, must of necessity furnish a figurative representation of what was to take place under a subsequent Dispensation: otherwise it was a shadow unattended with a correspondent reality. Considered in itself, exclusive of its relation to Christ, and the object it had in view of preserving the backsliding Israelites from the surrounding idolatry, the Ritual service of it was both unmeaning and unprofitable. For what could the pouring out the blood of bulls and of goats, whilst the eye of the sacrificer looked no further, have to recommend it? But, considered as a preparatory introduction to a more spiritual Dispensation; as pre-figurative of that "better hope in the fulness of time to be brought in, by which alone fallen man has access to God," Heb. vii. 19.—it constituted a subject of the most interesting and edifying kind.

It was indeed a temporary provision adapted to the circumstances of the parties, for whose use it was immediately designed; the object of which was to lead

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to perfection; at the same time that in itself it made nothing perfect. On which account it may be considered as a sort of connecting medium between the original promise made to Adam, and the actual fulfilment of it. Consequently when that fulfilment eventually took place in the person of Jesus Christ, the conclusion to which the typical reasoning addressed to the Jews was designed to lead, was obviously this; that the presence of the reality superseded the use of the shadow; that the actual sacrifice of Christ on the Cross, rendered the continuance of its type useless: in which case, the figurative service of the Law, and the more spiritual Dispensation of the Gospel, would have appeared to the Jews in their proper light. For, in such case, they would have been seen to have been not only the ultimate end, but the very sum and substance of the whole Law: the life and energy of every part and every ordinance: all without Him being but a dead form and an empty name.

But though the blindness of the carnal Jew, who at the time of our Saviour's appearance in the flesh, had totally lost sight of

of the spiritual object to which the Ritual Service was designed to point, prevented this obvious conclusion from being generally drawn; still the Law, considered as one link in that chain of Providence, by which the different parts of the œconomy of Divine Grace are as it were held together, is not without its important use. Though its actual observance has been superseded, the spiritual application and moral use of it still remains: furnishing to Christians, from that striking coincidence to be traced between the shadows of the Law and the good things of the Gospel, a ground for the most decided conviction in support of the Christian cause. For, as a certain period of time had been determined on, for carrying into effect the great scheme of Redemption; it is to be expected, in justice to the consistency of the divine plan, that every preceding Dispensation of Providence, should contribute its proportionate degree of evidence to the confirmation of that plan when actually accomplished.

We do not mean to say, that the correspondence between the Types and the things

things typified, constitutes the only ground on which the Advocate for the truth of Christianity may take his stand; but this we say; that by marking the steps which Providence took in conducting the great work of Redemption to its perfect completion, it points out to notice that striking connection between the several parts of Divine Revelation, which cannot fail, when duly appreciated, to strengthen the faith and confirm the practice of every considerate man. It points out Him, who is the Alpha and Omega of all God's Dispensations in the œconomy of Divine Grace; "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever;" "in whom all the promises of God to man are Yea and Amen."

For, as far as laying open the secret purpose of that Being, who seeth the end from the beginning, by regularly tracing the progress of his Dispensations, can be a proof; so far are the Types of the Old Testament as they are applied and fulfilled in the New, a proof of the truths of Christianity. "These providential congruities (as they have been styled) between the times of the Old and New Testament, do very

very much confirm the authority of both Testaments. From hence we learn that the Scriptures comprehend one entire scene of Providence, which reaches from one end of the world to the other. And that God, who is the beginning and end of all things, by various steps and degrees, pursues one great design; namely, the setting up the kingdom of his Son, through the several stages of the world; and will still carry it on by such measures as seem best to his infinite wisdom; till the great day of the consummation of all things. Such a gradual opening of this wonderful scene of Providence, is a new argument of that infinite wisdom which contrived it, and justifies this mystical way of propounding it."

The conclusion to which the foregoing observations lead, has, in some degree, been already anticipated: namely, that the Old and New Testament, constituting two parts of the same Divine Revelation, having for their subject one and the same scheme of Redemption; all the rays of divine light, which have at different times been shed abroad in the world, for the purpose

purpose of enlightening the mind of fallen man on this great subject, must meet together in some one *central* point. For though the dispensations of divine grace have been varied with the circumstances of the world, yet the object of them has been uniformly the same. Every part of Revelation, therefore, which respects that object, however obscure and difficult to be understood it may have been rendered, from the corruption of the channel through which it has passed; must, nevertheless, have a determined application, correspondent with the eternal purpose which the manifold wisdom of God purposed in Christ Jesus: "that in the Dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ."—Ephes. i. 10.

The Doctrine consequently which accompanies the mysterious work of Redemption, must be of a piece with the revealed plan: otherwise that Revelation which was designed to give information on this subject, would be at variance with itself.

Such was the conclusion, to which the analogy

analogy between the Law and the Gospel, so expressly urged both by our Saviour and his Apostles; was designed to lead the Jewish nation. But though the argument built on this ground, applied particularly to those who lived under the Law, yet was it not exclusively appropriated to them. The evidence which the Types of the Old Testament bear to the Facts recorded in the New, was not intended to be confined to the conversion of the unbelieving Jew; but to accompany the Christian Dispensation through every stage of its progress; as furnishing the most convincing testimony in support of the Doctrines of the Gospel; and, on that account, the least liable to evasion.

Miracles, though most powerful in their immediate effect on the parties who were eye-witnesses of them, bear testimony to the Divine Character of our Saviour; rather than to the particulars of his Doctrine. His works were appealed to by Him, as a proof of his Divine Mission. But the specific purpose of that Mission was to be proved in another way. Whilst the compleat Evidence from Prophecy, how

how striking soever the testimony which from time to time it bears to the progress of the mediatorial scheme, seems reserved for that period, when, in consequence of the vail of futurity having by degrees been drawn aside, the whole plan of Divine Providence in the Redemption of the world, will receive that full and perfect degree of illumination, which, it may be supposed, will accompany the last important scene of it, at the second coming of the Son of Man in Glory: when "having put down all rule, and all authority, and all power, he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, that God may be all in all."—1 Cor. xv. 24.

The argument from Prophecy, it must be allowed, according to the observation of the Apostle, 2 Pet. i. 19, is firmer than the argument from miracles; the latter being *temporary*; addressed to the senses, and depending for its force on the testimony of the beholders: whilst the argument from Prophecy fulfilled, and continually fulfilling, is of a more confirmed and permanent kind; being addressed to the understanding of believers in all ages.

But

But that evidence to which our attention is *now* directed, drawn from the appointed correspondence between the Jewish and Christian Dispensations, has this advantage over every other; that it applies immediately to the confirmation of the characteristic Doctrines of the Cross. The argument which it furnishes for that purpose, being of that unanswerable kind, as to bid defiance to every thing short of a declared rejection of all Divine Revelation whatever. For it proceeds on this firm ground, that no sophistry can ever shake, that the several parts of a Divine Revelation, relative to the same subject, must be in unison with each other. From whence it follows, as a necessary consequence of the Old Testament being admitted to be a part of that Revelation; that the Doctrine of Infidelity which rejects Jesus Christ in his distinguishing character as Redeemer of fallen man, must be false; and that that doctrine alone, which acknowledges Him in the character, in which He is represented in the New Testament, as the Lamb of God slain for the sins of mankind,

kind, can be true; because *that doctrine alone* renders the Bible a consistent book.

To avoid the above obvious conclusion, which so decidedly militates against their favourite heresy, infidels are reduced to the necessity of denying the inspiration of the Records, on which that conclusion is built. "That many of those Scriptures (says one of the boldest heretics of the present day) which form the most *essential parts* of the Canon of the Apostate Church, must be *fabulous* and *false*, seems as certain, as that the word of God is true."*

In pursuance of which idea, he proceeds to exclude from his Scripture Canon, all the Gospels but that of St. Luke's, together with the chief part of St. Paul's Epistles; for this evident reason; because they are not to be reconciled with his favourite Doctrine of the simple humanity of Jesus Christ.

"The Evangelists (says another modern Infidel† of the most eccentric kind) might

* Evanson's "Dissonances of the Four Generally Received Gospels," p. 8.

† Dr. Priestley. Second Letter to a Young Man.

all

all be very honest men, in the main, well-informed with respect to what they undertook to relate; and yet write their several narratives with all the variations that we find in them, (writing *without any inspiration at all)* and a considerable time after the events."

"But surely, (as a learned Divine* has observed) without contending for the plenary inspiration of every "iota and tittle" of the Gospels; to suppose that the Evangelists could unfold the mystery of the Gospel; the sublime, and, in their full extent, incomprehensible doctrines of the Christian Dispensation, without divine inspiration; that there is only one God, and "one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus," our Advocate with the Father: and another Advocate, the Holy Ghost, whom he expressly promised to send unto his faithful disciples, "to guide them into all the truth" of the Christian Dispensation; is to banish divine agency where it was indispensably requisite; to disclaim all illumination from above coming down from *the Father of lights*:—a

* Dr. Hales. Inspector.

doctrine, at which Socrates, Plato, and Cicero would have shuddered with horror. It is indeed to render the word of God, like their Pharisaical predecessors, whom our Saviour upbraided, *of none effect through their vain traditions*, and vainer *philosophy*."

Was I therefore called upon, to furnish what appears to me the most unanswerable argument in support of Christianity, it should not be drawn merely from the collation of particular texts of Scripture; because this is a species of proof liable to those cavils and misinterpretations, to which scepticism ever has had, and ever will have recourse; but it should be drawn from that concurrent testimony, which the general tenor of Divine Revelation bears to this important subject; upon the principle of this acknowledged axiom; that the greater necessarily contains the less; consequently, what is proved true in the *whole*, cannot be disproved by any supposed contradiction between its component parts.

On this ground the argument, in support of the great Doctrine of *Atonement*, will ever stand secure. It is on this ground, therefore,

therefore, that we profess to meet every opposer of that essential doctrine of our faith; in conformity with the following rational position: "When we inquire into the doctrine of any book or set of books, concerning any subject; and particular passages are alledged in favour of different opinions; we should chiefly consider what is the *general tenor* of the whole work with respect to it; or what impression the first careful perusal of it would probably make upon an impartial reader."—Let the testimony of the Holy Scriptures relative to the essential doctrines of Christianity, be determined by this standard of judgement, and we have no doubt on our mind with respect to what will be the result of the inquisition.

To those indeed, who, in consequence of considering the subject of Christianity as confined to the writings of the New Testament, have been in the habit of regarding the Old as a *dead* Letter; in which they have, comparatively speaking, no interest or concern; a mode of proof drawn from the connection between the different dispensations of divine grace, calculated

calculated to furnish that united testimony to the Doctrines of the Cross, to which they have paid no attention; will have little to recommend it. But before it be rejected, they would do well to reflect; that the confining all knowledge of the Gospel Covenant to the days subsequent to our Saviour's appearance in the flesh; when, according to the sentiments of those who read the Bible by halves, the Doctrine of Immortality was *first* brought to light; necessarily draws after it two propositions totally irreconcileable with the wisdom and goodness of the Divine Being; namely, that for the first four thousand years of the world's duration, mankind were kept in ignorance, with respect to the subject of knowledge, in which they were most deeply concerned; and that the Deity himself ministered to that ignorance, by appointing, for his chosen people in particular, a religious service devoid of all spiritual use or meaning.

But, we know this not to have been the case. Our Saviour has plainly told us that Christianity was to be learnt from the Scriptures of the Old Testament. "They

are they (said he, addressing himself to the unbelieving Jews,) which testify of me."—Consequently "had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me." John v. 39. 47.

And we will venture to say, Christianity will never be so well understood, as when the Old and New Testament are so brought together, as mutually to illustrate and confirm each other. In this way, Christianity was taught, in those days when it was best understood. The Epistle to the Hebrews furnishes the intelligent reader with the most compleat specimen of this mode of teaching. In that epistle, we have the observation of an old Father of the Church verified. "What (says Justin Martyr) is the law? The Gospel predicted.—What is the Gospel? The law fulfilled." Correspondent with which observation, is the assertion of St Chrysostom; that "two covenants, two handmaids, two suitors attend upon our Lord. Christ is announced in the Prophets. Christ is preached in the New Testament. The Old Testament declared beforehand the New; and the New interpreted the Old."

These

These two covenants, which met together in Christ, were typified by the two sons, born to Abraham; the one by a bond-maid, the other by a free woman: "which things (says the Apostle) are an allegory;" that is, these two sons, born of two different mothers, are intended figuratively to represent the two different states of the Jewish and Christian Dispensation: the former a state of bondage, under the law delivered from Mount Sinai, in which the Jews lived; the *latter*, that state of freedom under the Gospel, into which all members of the Christian Church are admitted. Whoever, therefore, does not understand the nature of these two dispensations, together with their relative connection; the one considered as preparatory and introductory to the other; the former as the enslaving letter, of which the latter is the spiritual accomplishment; he will not only be unqualified to appreciate the "liberty wherewith Christ hath made him free;" Gal. v. 1. but will be also unfurnished with that most powerful argument in support of Christianity, which is to be drawn from the concurring evidence,

which

which the different dispensations of Divine Wisdom bear to the same general plan of Redemption.

When our Blessed Saviour appeared in the flesh, the people to whom he came received him not.—Men for the most part disbelieve truth, because they have first embraced error, and cannot part with it. This was the case with the Jews at the coming of our Saviour. A general ignorance of the spiritual meaning of the promise made to Abraham, and of the typical service of the law delivered by Moses, joined with an ill-founded prejudice in favour of their own particular condition, led them to mistake the character, in which the Messiah was to appear, not less than the object of his mission. "They erred, (as our Saviour told them) not knowing the Scriptures."

Those who, in these enlightened days of the Gospel (as they are called) reject the Religion of a crucified Redeemer; setting up in its place the idol of the Imagination; that spurious offspring of modern philosophy, the *Religion of Reason*, (as it is falsely styled;) which has neither priest, sacrifice, nor

the dispensation of divine mercy, the despised, wandering, outcast Jews shall again be taken into favour. " And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee; the blessing and the curse which I have set before thee; and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath driven thee; and shalt return unto the Lord thy God; and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart and with all thy soul; that then the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath scattered thee." Deut. xxx. 1.

Correspondent with this prophecy by Moses, is the declaration relative to the same subject by the Apostle; that the branches which have been broken off, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be again grafted in. Rom. xi. 23.

Happy will it be for those Christians, who, by holding fast the faith, as delivered by the saints, shall be qualified to be instruments

struments in God's hand, for the conversion of his chosen people.

Might we presume to anticipate the glorious scene, when this conversion shall take place; we might picture to ourselves the heretofore incredulous, but still zealous Jew, with the Books of Moses in his hand, anxiously tracing out the particular outlines of that sacred character, to which his attention is now for the first time directed. Mark his countenance, speaking the language of increasing astonishment; as the rays of evangelic light, reflected from the different parts of his favourite law, break through the thick cloud, that has hitherto obscured his understanding. Behold him placed at the foot of the Cross; one while bowed down with shame and compunction for the crying sins of his nation; one while lifting up his eyes, and fixing them in pious adoration on Him whom his Fathers pierced. In the language of heartfelt rapture hear him crying out; "Blessed be God, I have at length found Him, of whom Moses and the prophets did write; the Lamb of God, slain for the recovery of a lost world. For this is He, of whom

whom it is written; "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken of God and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before his shearer is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities.—And he was numbered with the transgressors, and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." Isaiah liii.

"Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation;" which, in thy manifold wisdom, hath been conducted from the first dawn of evangelic light in Paradise, through its faint shining under the shadow of the law, to its fulness of meridian splendour,

dour, at the coming of the Sun of Righteousness into the world.—Blessed be God, the scales of judicial blindness are fallen from me; and with the eye of Faith, I at length behold my Redeemer, the *Holy One* of Israel.—I now depart in peace; for, through that faith, "which is the evidence of things not seen," I *now* look forward, with confidence, to a *Resurrection in Glory.*"

DISCOURSE

DISCOURSE IV.

1 COR. i. 30.

Who of God is made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption.

THE person of whom the Apostle is here speaking is Jesus Christ, the great finisher of the whole œconomy of Divine Grace, relative to the recovery of fallen man.

What the Apostle says of Him on this occasion, at the same time that it is comprehensive of his character and office, may be considered moreover, as descriptive of the nature and genius of that Religion, which he came to establish in the world.

The words of the text, therefore, place before us the greatest subject that can be submitted

submitted to human consideration; namely, the work of Redemption by Jesus Christ; whether we regard the work itself, or the Worker of it.—They point out particularly those essential qualities, by which the character of Jesus Christ is distinguished from that of every other teacher or messenger from God whatever: a distinction necessary to be attended to by all, who would form an adequate judgement of the Christian Dispensation.

Noah and Moses, the prophets and John the Baptist, were all, in their respective departments, commissioned from God to teach wisdom and righteousness to mankind; but with a view only of preparing them to reap the benefit of that great work, which was, in the fulness of time to be accomplished. Whilst the object of Christ's ministry on earth was, not merely to teach men the good and the right way, but to place them in a condition to be benefited by his instructions; by finishing that great work of reconciliation, which, according to the covenant of grace, he had engaged to perform; for that purpose becoming unto them "of God wisdom,

and

and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

The personal ministry of Jesus Christ then is to be considered, as the last of God's Dispensations, for the salvation of his fallen creature; and the perfection of that wisdom, which had at sundry times and in divers manners been revealed to mankind from the beginning: that consequently, to which all former dispensations were designed to lead, and in which they have their ultimate completion. On this account, we who live under this last Dispensation of Divine Grace, are said by the Apostle, "to be compleat in Christ."

No new Dispensation is therefore to be expected by us; every thing necessary to our salvation, in conformity with the plan of the divine œconomy, having been fully accomplished. By which we understand, every thing that God undertook to perform in the great work of Redemption, so far as the personal ministry of the Son of God on earth was concerned in the business, has been fulfilled. When Jesus Christ bowed his sacred head on the Cross, he expired uttering these memorable words; "*It is*

 finished."

finished."—The work which the Father had given him to do on earth, was then finished. The penalty due to sin being paid, and satisfaction made, the hand-writing that was against us was thereby so removed; as to render it possible, consistently with divine justice, for sinners to be saved.

But Christ, (says the Apostle,) "in that he died, he died unto sin once: Death hath no more dominion over Him."—"There remaineth consequently no more sacrifice for sin." A consideration, which obviously leads to the following awakening conclusion; that whosoever is to be saved, must be saved in conformity with that divine plan, which, so far as God is concerned in it, has already been carried into effect.

Hence it was that St. Peter, at the commencement of his ministry, delivered himself so decidedly on this subject, to the Chief Priests, Rulers, and Scribes, who required to know the authority by which he exercised his Apostolic function. "Be it known (says he) unto you all, and to all the people of Israel; that by the name of Jesus of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by Him doth

doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the Stone which was set at naught of you builders, which is become the Head of the Corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under Heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts iv. 10, &c.

By the terms of the Gospel then, the final condition of fallen man is to be irrevocably determined. From whence it follows that a proper acquaintance with those terms becomes a matter of primary consideration: that man, knowing what he has to expect, and what to perform, according to the tenor of that covenant under which he lives, may so conduct himself in this world, that the Grace revealed by the Gospel may not be bestowed on him in vain.

To this end, he must know not only to *whom* he looks for Salvation, but also the ground on which he is authorized to expect it. He must know in what sense Jesus Christ is made unto him *wisdom*, and *righteousness*, and *sanctification*, and *redemption*: or he will never form a true estimate of the character, in which Christ appeared in the

the world. And if he knows not the proper character of Jesus Christ, there is little or no probability of his reaping benefit from the work of his ministry.

It shall be my object therefore so to explain the words of the Text, in conformity with the general tenor of Scripture, that they may become a kind of fixed standard, both for the establishment of faith and the regulation of practice: that the member of the Christian Church may become perfect in the sense in which that word is applied to him by the Apostle; that having been made acquainted with the plan of Salvation by Jesus Christ, he may through Grace become finally qualified for the possession of it.

The words of the Text were originally addressed to the Gentile and Jewish converts, in the Church of Corinth. They contain a summary of Gospel blessings, strikingly adapted to the respective condition of the parties in question. And they shew, in brief, the manner, in which the Christian Religion corrected the errors and depravities of Heathenism, by substituting true wisdom for extravagant folly; at the same

same time that it supplied the defects, by realizing the shadows of the Law; thereby perfecting the great plan of Salvation by Jesus Christ.

"Christ, (says the Apostle,) is made unto us *wisdom*,"

To understand what is here meant by this expression, we must know to what particular subject it applies, and on what occasion it was originally made use of.

St. Paul, in the opening of the Epistle from whence the words of the Text are taken, is calling his disciples at Corinth to account, for the divisions that had taken place among them. These divisions, as they were given to understand, had been occasioned chiefly by the preference given to some Ministers above others; in consequence of superior abilities which they were supposed to possess. To counteract a prejudice, which could not fail to destroy that unity and harmony, by which the members of the Christian Church should at all times be joined together; St. Paul enters into argument on this subject, with the view of convincing his disciples at Corinth; that *wisdom*, in the *worldly* acceptation

ceptation of the word, had much less to do with the preaching of the Gospel than they vainly imagined. "Christ (says he) sent me to preach the Gospel, not with *wisdom of words*, lest the Cross of Christ should be made of none effect."—1 Cor. i. 17.

Lest, in consequence of the attention being fixed upon the eloquence and abilities of the preacher, the goodness of God, in the Redemption of the world by Jesus Christ, should be disregarded: and thus the disciple led to look to man rather than to God, as the Author of his Salvation. In such case indeed the Cross of Christ must become of none effect.

At the time when this Epistle was written, the seat of the Roman Empire, had attained to the highest pitch of civilized perfection. Philosophy, following the fate of arms, had there fixed her residence; and the state, to which the arts and sciences had advanced at this important period, appears to authorize a conclusion, that the powers of the human mind, had been carried to the extent of their natural exertion.

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Had the wisdom of this world then been necessary to the propagation of the Christian cause, it would doubtless have been employed. But the wisdom of this world was become so foolish in the eyes of God, that it was not to be honoured with so divine a work. On the contrary, its imposing authority was, on this occasion, to be scrupulously guarded against. And for the following very evident reason. The wise men of the heathen world, with all their boasted knowledge, neither knew God, nor the relation in which man stood to his Maker. In searching after what they called *wisdom*, they had totally lost the way to all true knowledge; having, according to the Apostle's description, " their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that was in them." Eph. iv. 18.

In fact, their wisdom was even unable to preserve the world from that most wretched state of mental depravity, which was a disgrace to rational beings; in consequence of which, " they changed the glory of the incorruptible God, into an image made like to corruptible man, and

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to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things; changing (as the Apostle strongly expresses it) the truth of God into a lie, and worshipping the creature more than the Creator." Rom. i. 25.

In fact, the further men dispersed from the patriarchal seats, where Revelation was never extinguished, and came the nearer to an uninstructed state, which is properly that of nature; the deeper they sunk in ignorance and barbarity. In the strong words of Job, they sat " in a land of darkness, as darkness itself, and of the shadow of death; without any order, and where the *light* is as darkness." Job. x. 22.

Such was *natural* Religion, even when accompanied with the boasted advantages of worldly wisdom. Let its advocates* behold

* Dr. Clarke, whose object it was to place the case of the heathens in the most favourable point of view, is obliged to make use of a scale of diminution, when describing their condition. " Men, (says he) without the assistance of Revelation, did not attain to a *right* knowledge of God, in *any considerable degree:* some argued themselves out of the belief of the very being of God; and in these enquiries, wherein they professed them to

behold the deformity of the idol, which, in compliment to human reason, they so often

to be most wise, they became fools." Rom. i. 22. To what lengths will a bad cause carry learned men? They knew God, but not *rightly;* then *falsely;* nor in any *considerable degree;* therefore not at all; for God is not discoverable by scraps or halves: they knew what their own ratiocination forced them to unknow, so far as to disbelieve his very existence. And after professedly laying out the whole effort of the human mind, to attain some wisdom in these sublimer subjects, they remained arrant fools; not knowing what, or why they worshipped. Nor will it mend the matter to glean a few detached sentences, scattered up and down the ancient writings, how charming soever they may be, and then cry out, Behold the strength of reason! but let a philosopher be named, even the divine Plato, who rightly judged, "that nothing should be attributed to God, that is not consentaneous to his nature;" Rep. ii. p. 379. And if a thousand glaring absurdities, falsehoods, contradictions, and inconsistencies, are not to be found in him, (which Cicero saw and lamented in his *Deus ille noster,*) the cause shall be given up. If they occur in every page, the few bright sayings are no more than flashes of lightning, which may amaze, but not direct the benighted traveller, and only prove, that they heard of subjects, which they did not *understand,* and *repeated* a name, the true import of which they never *knew.*

It has also been acknowledged by heathens, as well as Christians, that man may as well have no God, as to entertain base, unworthy conceptions of Him. Yet, by

often dignify with the distinction of being (if we may so call it) the elder brother of the Christian Revelation. Such was the wretched condition in which the most enlightened Professors of it were found, at the time when the Gospel of Christ was first introduced among them. So far as related to the knowledge of God and spiritual things, all was darkness, ignorance, and error. Even those who might have been better informed, had they been as eager to collect the rays of light, which, though greatly obscured, still beamed forth from Divine Revelation, as they were to become distinguished by worldly wisdom; who, from their proficiency in

by the tenor of the Gentile Catholic Faith, he was looked on as a material, impotent, and polluted Being.

The Scriptures account for all this; that the "nations had forgot God." Psalm ix. 7. After which, they never recovered the knowledge of Him, "nor called upon His name." Psalm lxxix. 6. "And when they knew not God, they did service to them, which by nature are not Gods." Gal. iv. 8. For "they sacrificed to devils, not to God." Deut. xxxii. 17.—1 Cor. x. 23. So that except belief and disbelief, knowledge and ignorance, truth and falsehood, have changed places, the heathens were utter strangers to the true Jehovah.

Ellis's Enquiry.

some

some subjects of sublime speculation, might, with such aid, from the visible things of nature, have inferred the Being and attributes of Nature's God; even these were nearly as ignorant, with respect to the great subject which it most concerned them to know, as the most unlettered of their community. If they knew any thing of God, it was a knowledge of that unsettled kind, that never led them to glorify him as God. The information which they might, and which they occasionally did receive from the contemplation of the works, they had not grace to turn to the honour of the Worker, by either publicly acknowledging his power, or even attempting to introduce his worship to any people or nation, amongst whom they lived; for they could not communicate to others, what they themselves did not know.

One example, from among the number of heathen sages, it will be sufficient to produce on this occasion; because his case is that, on which the advocates for natural Religion are apt to lay great stress. The example I mean, is that of Socrates; who,

though he appeared unshaken on the brink of eternity, concluded, nevertheless, his famous apology with these remarkable words: "It is now time that I go hence to die, and you to live; but which is best, no mortal, I think, can tell." Still, it has been generally understood, that Socrates knew the true God. By those who maintain this opinion, his conduct in the closing scene of his life, remains to be accounted for; when, during his long imprisonment, he made a serious preparation for death, by composing verses to the dæmon of Delphos, and translating Æsop's Fables; and in his last moments, called back, as it were, his departing soul, to order the discharge of a vow, by as stupid an act of idolatry, as the most ignorant savage was ever guilty of.

In reference, therefore, to the unprofitableness of the wisdom of the heathen sages in this respect, the Apostle proceeds to apply to them the words of the Prophet. "It is written, (says he) I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nought the understanding of the prudent." 1 Cor. i. 19.—Their wisdom and understanding

standing had been useless; for they had left the world uninformed on the most important of all subjects. " Therefore did God make foolish the wisdom of this world." 1 Cor. i. 20. He put the vain possessors of it to shame; by employing poor unlettered fishermen to teach that lesson to their disciples, which was not to be learned in the heathen academies; a lesson by which they might become wise unto salvation. " For (continues the Apostle) after that in the wisdom of God, the world, by wisdom, knew not God; it pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe." 1 Cor. i. 21.

" To the wise men among the heathens, the preaching of the Cross appeared, as it does to the wise men of the present day, *foolishness*." It affects not that vain parade of science and system calculated to flatter the pride of the human understanding; but in the plain, though dignified language of inspired truth, teaches men what they most want to learn; the knowledge of God, and of themselves.

Let the preaching of the Gospel then be styled *foolishness* by the wise men of the

the world; still, as the foolishness of God, it is wiser than man. It has taught the world *true wisdom*, which none of the heathen philosophers were ever able to do, and which modern philosophers, (as they are falsely called) if we may judge from some specimens of their talents lately produced, are still less likely to do. It has brought those who sat in gross darkness, at the coming of Christ in the flesh, to the clear light of Evangelical Truth. In consequence of which glorious manifestation of true wisdom, by the shining of the Sun of Righteousness on the world, the dumb idols of senseless superstition fell prostrate at the foot of the Cross; whilst it has been rendered possible, by the aid of that Light which has shined from on high, for the most unlettered peasant in a Christian country, to boast himself of more true wisdom than the wisest philosopher of antiquity.

It was, therefore, to give the most striking specimen of the unprofitableness of all knowledge, that does not lead its possessor up to God; that at the publication of the Gospel, God thought proper

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to make a marked distinction between the wisdom of this world, and that wisdom which cometh from above, by passing by for the most part the wise men after the flesh, the mighty and the noble; and choosing the foolish and weak things of the world, to confound the wise and the mighty: that the foolishness of preaching (as it was contemptuously styled) might bring those back to God, whom the wisdom of this world (falsely so called,) had been instrumental in drawing away from Him.

And one principal object which God had in view, in thus humbling the wise men of the Heathen world, by making their boasted learning and philosophy give way to the arguments and proofs, with which the first, for the most part, unlettered Teachers of the Gospel were furnished, was, (as the Apostle proceeds to inform us,) to teach mankind that important lesson, which must accompany the Gospel, to render it effectual; namely, "that no flesh should glory before God; but that he that glorieth, might glory in the Lord." 1 Cor. i. 29. 31.—That fallen man should

should in humility and gratitude look up to God, as the Author of Salvation, and the fountain of all true wisdom: that all "imaginations should be cast down, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God; and every thought brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ," 2 Cor. x. 5.—"who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

From this review of the Apostle's mode of arguing on this occasion it appears; that in reminding his disciples at Corinth, that Jesus Christ was made unto them *wisdom*, he had the condition of the Gentile world principally in view; meaning thereby to contrast the true wisdom, by which man becometh wise unto Salvation, with that vain wisdom of the Heathen philosophers; which so far as respected all saving knowledge, left the possessors of it in a state of ignorance and folly.

By Jesus Christ, that *embodied wisdom from on high*, the great mystery of godliness had been fully revealed. With reference to this divine subject, He was made *wisdom* unto them that believed: not, as the

the Apostle observes; "the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, who come to nought; but the wisdom of God in a mystery; even that hidden wisdom, which God had ordained before the world to our glory." 1 Cor. ii. 7. Thus was Christ made *wisdom* to the Gentile; leading him, by the light of his Gospel, from the dark ignorance of his heathenish state, to that supreme species of knowledge, which constitutes the perfection of human nature; the knowledge of God, and his Salvation.

But Jesus Christ is not only made unto us *wisdom*, that is, he is not only the author of all true wisdom; but he is also made unto us *righteousness;* in the proper sense of that expression; to the end, that every one disposed to glory, "might glory in the Lord." With reference to this part of our Saviour's office, one of the names, by which he was distinguished in the Old Testament, was that of THE JUST ONE. The idea is taken from the equality of scales and weights. Hence it is, that Justice is emblematically represented with a pair of equal scales in her hand, to signify

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that the essence of Justice consists in an equal distribution.

The object of the covenant entered into by the Divine Persons in the Godhead was, to restore to its proper standard, the scale, by which the rewards of a just God were to be measured out to his reasonable creatures. The Fall had rendered man's payment so short of the divine demand, and thereby inclined the scale so much against him, that it required an extraordinary weight to be thrown in, to bring it back to its *just equilibrium*.

That Divine Person who undertook to do this for man, was, therefore, distinguished by the title of the "*Lord our Justifier*:" "THE JUST ONE," or the *Giver of Justice*. Hence it was, that the sacrifices under the Law, were called "*Sacrifices of Righteousness*," because they typically represented that Person, who was to be *Righteousness for man*; for, considered in themselves, sacrifices had no claim to such a title. "Offer unto God (says the Psalmist) the *Sacrifices of Righteousness*, and trust *in the Lord*." Psalm iv. 5. When, therefore, the Prophet proclaimed the advent

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of our Saviour, he described him under this interesting title; "Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, the *Just One*, and having Salvation." Zech. ix. 9.

In correspondence with which characteristic description of our Saviour, was the accusation brought by St. Stephen against the stiff-necked Jews. "Which (said he) of the Prophets, have not your Fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the *Just One*." Acts vii. 52.

To the same characteristic title, Ananias "a devout man according to the Law," referred, in the delivery of his commission, to Saul. "And he said, the God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that *Just One*." Acts xxii. 14.

To this prominent part of our Saviour's character, Isaiah appears to allude in that Evangelical description of Him, to be found in the fifty-third chapter of his prophecy; in the eleventh verse of which it is said of him, that by his knowledge shall my righteous servant make justification

tion * לרבים to the *Great Ones*. Therefore will I divide him a portion רבים with the *Great Ones*. Because he shall empty out his body to death, and be numbered with the transgressors, and bear the forfeiture due to the Great Ones; and he shall intercede for transgressors." Isaiah liii. 11, 12.

According to this plan of *commutative righteousness*, which bears equal testimony to the infinite justice, and infinite mercy of its Divine Author; fallen man, in consequence of his obedience having been made, through the righteousness of the *Just One*, of full weight in the scale of Heaven, becomes entitled to an heavenly reward; and is thereby placed, through the stupendous mystery of the Covenant of Grace, on safer ground, than that on which he stood before the Fall; that Salvation, which, when originally entrusted to himself, was lost, being now, as it were

* The same word רבים which, without apparent reason, has been rendered differently in our translation, is thereby calculated to keep out of sight, that part of our Saviour's character, which, I conceive, it was the object of the prophecy, in this passage, to point out to notice.

put in trust for him, in the hands of another, *who is* "*mighty to save.*"

As the Apostle, in observing that Jesus Christ is made unto us *wisdom*, alludes to the false wisdom of the heathen world; so in adding, that he is made unto us *Righteousness*, he appears to have had immediately in view, that erroneous conclusion, which the pride and prejudice of the Jewish nation had drawn on this important subject; I say, the Apostle appears to have had the Jewish nation *immediately* in view on this occasion; but without meaning to countenance the idea, that the erroneous conclusion in question, was *exclusively* appropriated to them; for it is confessedly the offspring of human pride in every condition. "I bear them record (says St. Paul, speaking of his brethren, the Jews) that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they, being ignorant of *God's righteousness*, and going about to establish *their own righteousness*, have not submitted themselves unto the *righteousness of God.*" Rom. x. 2, 3.

At the time of our Saviour's appearance in the world, the Jews, as a nation, were unin-

uninformed, both with respect to the end and design of their Law. They had lost the key of knowledge, which could alone enable them to unlock the meaning of their own Scriptures. Unacquainted, through the blindness that was in them, with that covenanted plan of Salvation, by which man was, in the Evangelical sense, to become *righteous* before God; their ignorance, on this head, led them to have recourse to a plan of Salvation of their own, totally incompatible with it. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgement and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called, *the Lord our Righteousness.*" Jer. xxiii. 5, 6.

In conformity with this striking prophecy, allusive to the restoration of Israel, the Apostle tells the Jews plainly, that "Christ was the end of the Law for righteousness." Rom. x. 4. Hence, the Law is called a *Schoolmaster*, whose object it was

was to instruct those who lived under it, in the character and office of that Divine Person, by whom Judah shall be saved. But a judicial blindness had, at this time, fastened itself on the eyes of the Jewish people. In consequence of which, instead of looking through the Law for *righteousness*, to that Divine Person pre-figured by it, they looked to the *Law itself* for Salvation. "They sought righteousness (says the Apostle) not by faith in a Redeemer, but, as it were, by the works of the Law." Hence, proceeded that unfortunate zeal for the Law, which indisposed the Jews for the reception of the Gospel. With this false prejudice on their minds, the Saviour of the world became a stumbling block and rock of offence to them. Their Temple and their Law they thought were to be *perpetual*. They understood not, that the former was a type of the body of Christ, and the latter a shadow of the good things of the Gospel. When our Saviour, therefore, said to the Jews, in allusion to his own body, as the Temple in which the fulness of the Godhead dwelt bodily; an allusion, which was designed to lead the

Jews

Jews to a conception of the divinity of our Lord's person: "Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up." Their ideas were not carried beyond the literal construction of the words. "Then (said the Jews) forty and six years was this Temple in building, and wilt Thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the *Temple of his body.*" John ii. 20.

Under the influence of the same confined notions, when our Saviour "came to *his own*, his own received him not;" not so much because they knew him not; as because they beheld him in a most offensive light, as one come to change the Law and the Customs which Moses had delivered. Whereas had they gained that knowledge, to which the Law was designed to lead, they would have discerned the truth and importance of what Jesus Christ said to them, with the view of removing their ill-grounded apprehensions; "that he was not come to destroy the Law, but to fulfil it;" in other words, to render it compleat for the purpose for which it had been given; by performing on his part that condition of the Evangelical

lical Covenant, by which man's obedience, imperfect as it necessarily must be in his present fallen state, might still, through Him, find acceptance with God. In such case they would have understood that all the change our Saviour was about to introduce was from an *outward Law* to an *inward* one; from the *form* to the *substance*; from the *Letter* which killeth, to the *Spirit* which endureth for ever.

Thus stood the case with the bulk of the Jewish nation. Their prejudice for the Law accompanied with their ignorance of the Gospel, had led them to build their righteousness on a false foundation. In directing the attention of his Jewish converts therefore to what ought to be the object of their hope on this subject, the Apostle guarded them against the error that proved so fatal to their unbelieving countrymen. As if he had said; "Your brethren the Jews seek *a righteousness of their own* by the works of the Law. And, it must be allowed, "had there been a Law given which could have given life," their plan would be a wise one; for in such case, "verily Righteousness should

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have been by the Law." Gal. iii. 21.—But fallen man not being in a state to fulfil the condition, on which alone life is promised by the Law; and the sentence of the Law being absolute and irrespective; that "cursed is every one who continueth not *in all things* that is written in the Law to do them;" it necessarily follows, that by the works of the Law, either as an appointed ritual, or moral rule, no man living can be justified. Do ye therefore, (the Apostle may be supposed to add, by way of conclusion to his argument,) Do ye seek for righteousness from another quarter. Seek it on the plan which Christ has revealed; according to which every humble, penitent, and obedient sinner stands justified before God, through the merits of a crucified Redeemer.

This mode of reasoning, (as it has been already observed) did not so immediately apply to the Gentile Converts in the Church of Corinth. As members of the Christian Church, however, it was necessary that they should be reminded that Christ was unto them also made *Righteousness*. All the ideas they had hitherto gained

gained on this subject, if they had gained any, had been derived from that uncertain standard which Reason had set up in the fitness and unfitness of things; independent of all relation to the will of God; which constitutes the only proper ground of moral obligation. Knowing nothing of God, they could know nothing of his will; consequently they possessed no true principle, by which their moral conduct could be directed. It was to be expected, therefore, that the corruption of their morality would keep pace with their corruption in Religion. And such was the case. St. Paul tells us that God, by way of punishment for their not retaining him in their knowledge, gave them up to a reprobate mind: in consequence of which, they were filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, and maliciousness."—Rom. i. 29. &c.

Sunk down to this low state of corruption, as the heathen world confessedly was at the coming of Christ, to place before his Gentile Converts the character of that Divine Person, whose office it was, by bringing them out of darkness into light,

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to instruct them in the wisdom and righteousness revealed by the Gospel, was to take the readiest way to make them sensible of the advantage of their present condition. It was, in effect, to say what on a similar occasion he said to his Gentile Converts at Ephesus; "you, who were without Christ, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenant of promise, having no hope, and living without God in the world, are now made nigh by the blood of Christ; who has made both Jews and Gentiles, One:" that is; hath brought them both together into his Church; that he might "reconcile both in one Body unto God by the Cross; having slain the enmity thereby." —In consequence of which Death on the Cross, Christ is made Righteousness unto Gentile, as well as unto Jew.—That "*through Him* both Jew and Gentile might have access by one spirit unto the Father."—Ephes. ii. 12. &c.

Having thus shewn in what sense Jesus Christ is made *Wisdom* and *Righteousness*, as these words were originally applied by the Apostle to his Disciples at Corinth; I should

I should pass on, to the remaining part of my subject, had not as much time been already taken up as is usually allowed to discourses of this nature. I proceed therefore to that most important part of the ministerial office, namely, the application of religious subjects to the circumstances of the parties to whom they are immediately addressed.

The words of the Text are interesting to us, so far as we are concerned in them. Considered as addressed by Ministers of the Christian Church to their respective congregations, the subject contained in them is brought home to personal application. Taking the subject before us in this light, the only light indeed in which we are concerned to take it; the Gentile Converts in the Church of Corinth being considered as our representatives; St. Paul may be understood as speaking to us through them. Our case, so far as respects the privileges of the Gospel, corresponds with what their's was. We, like them, are *by nature* aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and, like them, have been admitted

mitted through grace into the covenant of the Gospel. We, in short, are the descendants of those Gentiles, who, on the defection of the Jews, were heretofore brought out of darkness into light, by the preaching of the Apostles. We, this day, might have lived in gross darkness, as our heathen forefathers did, previous to their conversion: had it not been our happiness to be born in a country, where the light of Christ's Gospel may be said to light every man that cometh into the world. A blessing, which, on our part, demands the utmost return of gratitude; a return, which can in no way be so acceptably shewn, as in the worthy use of the blessings we enjoy. "For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for?" Deut. iv. 7.

Christ Jesus is made unto us *wisdom*. The light of his Gospel has effectually chased away those clouds of heathen ignorance, which must otherwise have surrounded us. In this sense our Blessed Saviour calls himself "the light of the world;"

world;" and says, that whoever followeth him, "shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

Being then, by the preaching of the Gospel, made *light* in the Lord, let it be our concern, my Brethren, to walk as children of the light; that the Sun of Righteousness be not provoked, by withdrawing his shining, to plunge us again into that darkness, from which we have been providentially delivered. To this end, let us "take heed to ourselves, and keep our souls diligently, lest we forget the things which our eyes have seen; and lest they depart from our hearts all the days of our lives." Particularly let us watchfully guard against that *wisdom of this world*, which, under the pretence of superior illumination, is now doing its utmost to extinguish the light which hath been graciously revealed. Remembering, at all times, that whilst spiritual knowledge is the parent of humility, the wisdom of this world seldom fails to generate *pride*. And as pride once cast angels out of heaven; we may rest assured, that it will oppose the most effec-

tual barrier to the admission of mortals into it.

In thus guarding against that wisdom of this world, which is, what it ever was, "foolishness with God;" we shall adopt the most probable means of securing ourselves against the self-sufficiency of those, who profess to be their *own* Saviours: remembering with humble gratitude, that Jesus Christ is made unto us *Righteousness*; by becoming that expiatory sacrifice, which took away the curse of the Law, which must otherwise have been executed on the sons of fallen Adam; Jesus Christ himself being made a curse for us; thereby giving us a right to plead his righteousness and sufferings on our behalf, as performed in our nature and in our stead.

In this sense did Christ condescend to become our *Righteousness*; by giving us a covenanted title to the benefit of that Righteousness which He wrought in the flesh: and thus compleating that gracious plan of Salvation; according to which, it became possible for sinful creatures, on certain conditions, to be accounted righteous

teous before God: being justified by his blood shed for the remission of sins; and reconciled to God by his death: *being justified*; i. e. being accepted or approved of as just; standing *recti in curiâ* before God: absolved from all guilt and punishment; "to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us *accepted in the Beloved*; in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." Eph. i. 6. Which mode of *justifying* sinners, is described by St. Paul, as an act of judgement on the part of God; by which he declareth his own righteousness or justice, in the acceptance of a competent satisfaction offered to him in amends for the debt due to him, and in reparation of the injury done to him; in consequence thereof acquitting the debtor, and remitting the offence. "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to de-

clare, at this time, *his righteousness; that* He might be just, and the justifier of him, which believeth in Jesus." Rom. iii. 24.

From whence it appears, that man's justification is the consequence of Christ's redemption; Jesus Christ having been made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God *in Him.* 2 Cor. v. 21. Not that Christ was himself a *sinner*, for "he knew no sin." But was made a *sin offering* for man; in the words of the Prophet, "the chastisement of our peace was upon Him." Isaiah liii. Nor that *His* righteousness so becomes *our's*, that we are righteous as he was: for, in such case, we could not be saved *as sinners*; but that the benefit of His righteousness * is so

* The doctrine of Christ's righteousness, considered as the source of spiritual benefit to fallen man, proves the divinity of our Saviour's character. If Christ were not *Jehovah,* he could not possibly be our righteousness. For as a creature, the righteousness of Christ, however perfect, could not be more so, than the Law of God required that it should be for *his own* justification; consequently, in such case, no benefit could be derived from it *to others.* But Jesus Christ, we are told, "is made *unto us* righteousness;" therefore Jesus Christ must have been more than man, in the words of the Prophet; "*the Lord our righteousness.*" Jer. xxiii. 6.

imputed

imputed, or made over to us, that *through Him*, we fallen, condemned creatures, are placed in a condition to be accepted at the Throne of Grace; not for any merits of our own, but for the merits of that all-sufficient Saviour; who, by his obedience unto death, has prevented the sins of all true believers from rising up in judgement against them. "For God hath shut up all in disobedience, that all being sinners before him, he might have mercy upon all, through the gracious mediation of that Son, in whom He is well pleased."

DISCOURSE

Jesus Christ, in his character of the *anointed of God*, came into the world, not only to teach man true wisdom, and to bring him acquainted with that plan of Evangelical righteousness, according to which alone, he might, as a fallen creature, venture to appear before the tribunal of a just God; but also (as the Apostle proceeds) to be made unto him *sanctification* and *redemption*. In other words to render the plan, which He revealed, a complete one; by fulfilling, in his own person, the conditions on which it had been originally established; being, with this gracious object in view, "made unto us of God, not only *wisdom* and *righteousness*, but *sanctification* also and *redemption*."

On the Fall of Adam, all free communication between an innocent creature and his Creator was at an end. The first covenant, the observance of which secured the privilege of free access to the Tree of Life, (the emblem and pledge of eternal happiness,) had been wilfully broken. The consciouness of sin, accompanied with the fear of the displeasure of his justly offended Maker, was the cause of Adam's foolish

attempt

attempt to hide himself from God. " I heard thy voice in the garden, (said he, in answer to God's enquiry after him) and was afraid, and hid myself." Gen. iii. 10.

In this state of conscious guilt, and consequent fear of punishment, Adam was prevented from falling into despair, by the revelation of that gracious plan of redemption, which had been prepared in the divine councils, according to which he was given to understand, that though as a fallen creature, he had lost all access to the emblematic Tree of Life; a way was still kept open to it, through the medium of that Divine Person, who had undertaken to undo the mischief the devil had wrought, by freeing man from the guilt and consequence of sin, and thereby restoring him, on certain terms, to his forfeited inheritance.

In allusion to this gracious plan, our Saviour is described by the Apostle, as " that new and living way, by which man has boldness to enter into the holiest." Heb. x. 20. Whilst the restoration provided for fallen man is described, with a marked reference to the original forfeiture.

"To him that overcometh, (said the *Alpha* and *Omega*, in the prophetic vision of St. John,) will I give to eat of the Tree of Life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God." Rev. ii. 7.

The change which took place in Adam's condition by his Fall, was necessarily followed by a suitable change in his religious worship. He was driven out from the earthly Paradise, because that free communication with the Tree of Life, which, as an innocent creature he enjoyed, had been forfeited by transgression, and the only remaining access to what that Tree represented, was through the office of a promised Redeemer; which a consciousness of guilt and corruption, had now shewn to be necessary. To convince him of the heinous nature of sin, and, at the same time, to fix in the mind of Adam and his posterity, an idea of the divine method, by which the guilt of it was to be done away; a form of worship allusive to the great work, which the second person in the Godhead had covenanted to perform, was, at this time, instituted. For as the Gospel was published to Adam,

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in the sentence denounced against the old serpent, that the " seed of the woman should bruise his head;" a religious service analagous to the Gospel, accompanied, it is to be presumed, the original publication of it.

A literal account of the circumstances which took place on this occasion, is not to be expected. For at this early period, and long after it, all knowledge, relative to spiritual and invisible things, were conveyed by emblematic representation. Indeed, after the use of letters had been established, the hieroglyphic mode of cloathing ideas was still retained. It was that language of the senses, by which, alone, any notion of things supernatural, and otherwise unintelligible, could be conveyed to the understanding. In allusion to which method of conveying spiritual knowledge, St. Paul observes, that " the invisible things of God are clearly seen from the creation of the world, being *understood* by the things which are made." Hence it is, according to the Apostle's words in another place, that " *now*, that is in this life, we see through a glass in an *enigma*,"

enigma," the figures of *visible* things being made use of, for the purpose of reflecting on our minds, some faint image of *invisible* things: but when we shall have attained to a state of perfection in a better world, we shall no longer see spiritual things by reflection, as it were from the glass of the creation, but we shall see them "*face to face,*" as they are.

In conformity, then, with this mode of conveying spiritual knowledge, through the medium of visible objects, a certain emblematic representation, under the name of the *Cherubim*, was set up " at the east of the Garden of Eden," Gen. iii. 24. immediately after the Fall, for the purpose (as it is recorded) of keeping or preserving a way to the Tree of Life. This emblematic representation, which had probably been lost amidst the corruptions of Egypt, Moses, on coming out of that idolatrous country, was directed to make *new*, after a particular pattern delivered to him in the Mount, for the service of the Tabernacle. Exodus xxv. The same emblematic representation was afterwards made to be placed in the Holy of Holies

in the Temple, by the express direction of David to his son Solomon, according to the pattern delivered to Solomon for that purpose; which, David says, "the Lord had made him understand in writing by his hand upon him, even all the works of this pattern." 1 Chron. xxviii. 19.

Before this emblematic representation, set up in the holy places made with hands, which St. Paul expressly calls "*the figures of the true*," the blood of the sacrifice was, on the solemn day of atonement, sprinkled by the High Priest. "Who served (says the Apostle) unto the example and shadow of heavenly things;" Heb. viii. 5. Or as it may be translated, "who waited upon the exemplar, or emblematic representation of heavenly things; performing before it, that figurative typical service, which signified, and pre-figured that offering, which Christ made to God in heaven, when, by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." Heb. ix. 12.

Though, therefore, (St. Paul says) "he cannot now speak particularly" on this

subject; from whence it is to be concluded, that the analogy, by which this emblematic exhibition was calculated to convey spiritual information to the human mind, is *now* not necessary to be particularly known, because we are now living under a more perfect Dispensation; still, with any one duly conversant with the Hebrew Scriptures, there seems to be no room for doubt, that the *Cherubim* were designed as an emblematic representation of the Covenant of Grace, entered into by the *three Great Ones* in the Godhead; set up for the comfort and support of man in his fallen condition; and before which, as a sacred memorial of that sublime mystery, which was, in the fulness of time, to be more perfectly revealed, the religious service of the infant Church, was, in faith, to be offered up.

That this is not mere unfounded conjecture, may be concluded from the testimony, which Solomon bears to this subject; where he says, either on the authority of revelation or tradition, that the altar in the Temple, was a resemblance of that which had been set up by God in the

the Holy Tabernacle from the beginning. "Thou hast commanded me, says Solomon, to build a Temple upon thy Holy Mount, and an altar in the city wherein Thou dwellest, a *resemblance of the Holy Tabernacle, which Thou hast prepared from the beginning.*" Wis. of Sol. ix. 8.

Now we know, that the blood of atonement shed on the altar, was afterwards sprinkled before the Cherubim in the Holy of Holies; for, as it has been above observed, it was unto the *exemplar, or pattern of heavenly things* that the Priests ministered. From whence the fair conclusion is, that the Cherubim were originally set up at the east of Paradise, for the purpose of the same religious service being performed before them *there*, that was, in process of time, performed before them in the Temple.

It is true, indeed, that on the first setting up the Cherubim, no express command is to be found in Scripture, directing the form of worship by sacrifice. Still the first mention made of sacrifice, in the way of relation, proves its early institution. We know, moreover, that under the Law,

the service of sacrifice was established by express direction delivered to Moses from the Deity. As natural reason, then, is utterly unable to point out any analogy between the blood of an innocent firstling of the flock offered up in sacrifice, and the sin of guilty man; we are, from the foregoing premises, fully justified in concluding, that it was in consequence of a divine command, that the blood of the sacrificed creature assumed its important significance, as the appointed emblem of that precious blood, which, according to the eternal purpose was to redeem the life of man.

On this head, modern philosophers and we are so far perfectly agreed, that animal sacrifices could not have gained establishment in the world, either on the principles of natural reason or religion. But when they ascribe the origin of them to superstition, we must remind them, that superstition is but the corruption of revelation, and consists in following the dictates of our own imagination in religious worship, instead of scrupulously abiding by the divine institutions. Had there been no true

Religion

Religion, there could not have been any that is false. Had there been no divine institutions, superstition would have had no foundation on which to have raised its imaginary superstructure. But God never established a covenant, without appointing some outward signs, or memorials, as pledges of his promises, and man's obedience. The very abuse of sacrifice, therefore, to the purposes of heathenism, proves the divinity of its origin. For to the perversion of sacred tradition,* are the corruptions of heathenism to be traced up.† And

* Isaiah i. 11. Psalm lx. 6.—l. 9.—li. 16.

† The more this subject, the most fruitful in the whole compass of literature, is investigated, the more satisfied shall we be, that the images of heathen idolatry, were but the corruptions, according to the imaginations of men at different times, of that primitive symbolical representation, originally set up at the Fall, for the purpose of preserving the Faith, and characterizing the worship of the true Religion. The reader has only to go far enough back, and he will arrive at the same divine fountain, to which the pure stream of patriarchal tradition, and the corrupt one of heathenish superstition are to be traced up. Mr. Maurice, in his "Dissertation on the Oriental Trinities," (which, by bringing the counterfeits, *the Pagan Triads*, to prove the *Realities*, thereby

And as the Deity repeatedly and formally disclaimed all virtue, considered as inherent in the sacrifices themselves, the divine appointment of them could have no other object in view, than to direct the eye of the offerer to that great atonement, which the blood of the slain animal was designed to shadow forth.

In correspondence with this conclusion warranted by the practice of sacrifice, the ceremonial part of the first religious service of which the Scriptures make mention, considered as the fœderal rite of that new covenant, which was instituted immediately after the Fall; the reception which

thereby makes the corruption of revelation bear testimony to the truth of it,) has done much in assisting the reader in this interesting research. If the reader would be further assisted, he will find more useful, because more *correct* information upon it, in the "*Trinitarian Analogy*," by that most excellent Divine, the late W. Jones. But should he be desirous of entering more deeply into this subject, (provided he be not prejudiced by the sound of a name) he will find most full and curious information upon it, in the writings of the late celebrated Mr. Hutchinson, who, with an industry of investigation peculiar to himself, has traced the doctrines and rites of heathenism backward to the remotest antiquity.

Abel's

Abel's sacrifice met with, comparatively with that of Cain, is to be accounted for.

" In process of time," (says the Sacred Historian,) or as it is better translated in the margin of our Bible, " at the end of days;" on the periodical return of that day, which had been sanctified from the beginning, and thereby more immediately set apart for religious worship; " it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And *Abel*, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering. But unto Cain and his offering he had not respect." Gen. iv. 3, 4.

The reason for this marked preference is given by the Apostle in the eleventh chapter to the Hebrews; where he says, " that by Faith, Abel offered unto God a *more excellent* sacrifice than Cain; by which he obtained witness that he was *righteous*; God testifying of his gifts." Heb. xi. 4.

Now " *Faith* (we are told by the same Apostle in the opening of the chapter, which records the powerful effects produced by it on different occasions,) is the

substance of things hoped for." Abel sacrificed *in Faith*. He sacrificed therefore in dependance on *something hoped for*. He offered up the appointed emblem of that all-sufficient sacrifice, to which divine revelation had taught him to look forward in hope, as the ground of his acceptance with God. And God bare testimony to his being *accepted in the Beloved*, by having respect to his offering.

Abel offered "of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof." Gen. iv. 4. The consecration of the firstlings to the Lord, we find afterwards receiving the public sanction of the Divine Command. "Every firstling that cometh of a beast, which thou hast, the males shall be the Lord's." Exod. xiii. 12. (see also xxii. 29, and xxxiv. 19.) God's express order for burning the fat is to be found in Exodus xxix. 13. "And thou shalt take all the fat that covereth the inwards, and the caul that is above the liver, and the two kidnies, and the fat that is upon them, and burn them upon the altar."

This sort of sacrifice was for עלה an *Holocaust*, or burnt offering; it was the sacrament

sacrament of atonement for sin, and could not, therefore, have been originally instituted but by that Divine Being, against whom sin had been committed. The offering up of which sacrifice, procured a cessation, or rather suspension from merited punishment; "a savour of rest," (as it is significantly called, Gen. viii. 21.) till the *Great Atoner* should come, to supply the imperfection of his typical representative, by paying down the full price for man's peace. Abel, therefore, in his sacrifice conformed to the instituted Ritual, under the Covenant of Grace, the outward part of which, consisted in shedding the blood of animals, as an acknowledgement of the forfeiture of life; and the emblematic representation of *that Sacred Blood*, by which life was covenanted to be restored. The inward part consisted in the admission, that an atonement was to be made for the sacrificing party, and the offering up of the emblem, was the act to be performed to obtain the benefit of it.

Cain, on the other hand, "offered up of the fruit of the ground." His sacrifice was an acknowledgement of the Deity in his

his character of *Creator of the world*, and may be considered as a sort of quit-rent paid to the Lord of Nature, for possession and enjoyment. A very proper sacrifice to be offered up by man, whilst he continued in his original state of innocence. But after sin had been introduced into the world, a sacrifice of a different kind was necessary to accompany it, in order to render man acceptable in the eyes of his Maker. By not offering up, therefore, the appointed emblem of that sacrifice, which was alone able, by taking away sin, to make the offerer *righteous* before God, Cain acted not in conformity with that divine plan of salvation through the blood of a Redeemer, which the Fall had rendered necessary. For this reason, it is presumed, his sacrifice was rejected; not that it was in itself improper, for such sacrifice also had, doubtless, the authority of divine sanction, it being afterwards enjoined under the Law; but because it was inadequate to the circumstances of Cain's present condition. It was the sacrifice of *thanksgiving*, not that of *atonement*. The sacrifice of an *innocent* creature to an all-

bounteous

bounteous Creator, not that of a *guilty* one to an offended God; and therefore unwelcome, because unaccompanied with that appointed memorial, which alone could gain it acceptance. The offering up, therefore, of such a sacrifice under such circumstances, might be considered as a formal rejection on Cain's part of that Covenant of Grace, which had been established in the promised Seed.

On the ground of the foregoing statement, relative to the Cherubim, and the marked approbation by which God distinguished the sacrifice of Abel from that of Cain, the circumstance which followed this event, " when Cain (as the history proceeds to inform us) went out from the *presence of the Lord*," Gen. iv. 16. admits of a ready solution. The Cherubim set up in the Holy of Holies, St. Paul expressly calls " the exemplar, or image of heavenly things."

Hence, the place where this *exemplar*, or image of heavenly things stood, and where the Lord of Glory appeared in the cloud over the mercy seat, Lev. xvi. 2. Ezek. i. 26. was called the *dwelling*, or *residence*

residence of those in heaven, and may, therefore, be considered as the presence chamber of the Godhead on earth.

In correspondence with this idea, when the High Priest entered into the holy place, he was said to "go in *before the Lord*;" Exod. xxviii. 30. for he then appeared in the presence of the divine representatives. When Cain, therefore, is said to have "*gone forth from the presence of the Lord*," it may be understood, that he went forth from the Holy Tabernacle, in which the consecrated emblems were originally placed by God; and by thus turning his back on the instituted form of worship appropriate to the condition of fallen man, manifested his decided rejection of the Covenant of Grace.

The reason given by the Apostle for Cain's murder of his brother is, "because his own works were *evil* and his brother's *righteous*." 1 John iii. 12. But in what sense could these two important words be applied to this occasion, unless with reference to the quality of the sacrifice offered by each party? And with what propriety can the two different sacrifices of Cain and

Abel

Abel, (for they both offered to the Lord) be thus characterized, unless the sacrifice of the former be considered to have been that of a Deist, who acknowledges no Saviour; whilst that of the latter was the sacrifice of a Christian, looking forward in hope to the divine promise; on which account "*Abel being dead, yet speaketh.*"

It does not appear from the history, that God was any respecter of persons on this occasion. But his respect seems to have regarded the different quality of the sacrifice offered by each party. "Why is thy countenance fallen? said God to Cain; if *thou dost well*, shalt thou not be accepted? (or as it is in the margin) "shalt thou not have the excellency? and if thou doest not, sin lieth at the door." Gen. x. 7. Cain was rejected, because he did not well; he offered not the emblem of that sacrifice, by which alone sin could be removed from his door. And instead of profiting by the reproof he had received, in an immediate attempt to recover the ground he was losing, he persisted in his rejection of the covenanted plan of salvation. In sullenness and wrath "he went out from the presence

presence of the Lord;" virtually turned his back on revelation; and thereby laid the foundation for heathenism.

For from this divine institution of sacrifice in Paradise, for the purpose of directing the attention of the sacrificer to the great object of his hope in the promised Seed, which was to bruise the serpent's head; was derived the custom of making this ceremonial rite an essential part of the religious worship of every country. And though the original design and object of the institution was soon lost, through the gradual perversion of it, yet the idea annexed to such a service, still kept possession of the human mind. A received opinion derived, it is probable, partly from the tradition of the Fall, partly from a conscious sense of imperfection, prevailed in the early days of the world, that human nature had undergone some change for the worse; that it had contracted a corruption from which it became necessary that it should be cleansed, in order to its being in a capacity to be restored to the favour of its Maker. This generally received opinion, gave rise to the number-

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less forms of superstitious purification, which characterized the heathen Ritual; which, at the same time that they exposed the vain imaginations of the parties concerned in them, bore, at least, indirect testimony to the reality of the fact to which they alluded; namely, that sanctification was necessary to the actual condition of mankind.

The general expectation of the benefit which was to accrue from blood, had not only, in very early days, drawn the heathens into the practice of oblations of blood, nay, even of human blood; but also into the practice of strangling creatures, that they might eat the blood in the flesh; a practice which continued after the appearance of Christ in the world. In opposition to which customs, was that famous decree of the Apostles. Acts xv. 20. "That they abstain from pollution of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood."

A great part of the civilized world was in this state of corruption, with respect to religious worship, when the Hebrew nation sojourned in the Land of Egypt. Having

Having lost the knowledge of the true God, they had set up the works of his hands as objects of worship in his stead. Become dark in their understanding, they looked not beyond second causes. To the host of heaven, the sun, moon, and stars, as to their Saviours and divine benefactors, temples, altars, and idols, had been set up, accompanied with such appropriate emblems and services, as had been suggested by the corrupt imagination of the worshippers. When the Hebrews, therefore, were delivered from that land of gross superstition, in which they had long sojourned, and brought into the wilderness in their way to Canaan; it became necessary to recover them from the idolatrous corruption they had contracted, to the pure worship of the God of their fathers. For this purpose they were placed under the severe yoke of the Law, which was calculated to preserve them from any conformity to the idolatrous services, to which they were but too much inclined, by that attention which a regular observance of their own burthensome Ritual now exacted from them. "The Law (the Apostle says)

says) was added, because of transgressions." It was added to the Patriarchal Religion, to prevent those abominations which heathenism had brought into it. Gal. iii. The Law was added to the promise, not for the purpose of making any change in the Evangelical promise made to Abraham, but with a view to its better security. The transgressions which had prevailed, in consequence of the corruption of the patriarchal religion, had rendered the introduction of the Law absolutely necessary, not only as a moral rule, but moreover as a fence to the Hebrew nation against the idolatry of the country, from which they had been brought forth; as well as against that of the different nations which they were commissioned to cast out. "When (says God by the mouth of his prophet) I brought them forth of the Land of Egypt, I said unto them, cast ye away every man the abomination of his eyes, and defile not yourselves with the idols of Egypt, I am the Lord your God. But they rebelled against me, and would not hearken unto me, neither did they forsake the idols of Egypt.

Wherefore

Wherefore I caused them to go forth out of the Land of Egypt, and brought them into the wilderness. And I gave them my statutes, and shewed them my judgements, which if a man do he shall live in them." Ezek. xx. 7.

And it does not seem to have been God's design to have loaded his people with such a burthensome ritual, had they not sinned in the affair of the Golden Calf, by setting up an Egyptian idol for the object of their religious worship. "Thus saith the Lord of Hosts; I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices. But this thing commanded I them, saying; Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well with you. But they hearkened not." Jer. vii. 22.—"The house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness; because they had not executed my judgements, but had despised my statutes, and had polluted my Sabbaths, and their eyes were after *their fathers' idols.*

Wherefore

Wherefore (or on this account,) I gave them statutes *which were not good*, and judgements whereby they *should not live.*" Ezek. xx. 24, 25.

To the moral Law was added the Law of carnal ordinances, which the Apostle tells us was afterwards abolished for the weakness and unprofitableness of it. Heb. vii. 16. Weak however and unprofitable as the Law was, when considered in itself, it answered the end of its institution for the time being, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made. By a particular ritual it separated the Jewish people from all other nations, for the express purpose of making them the Preservers of the true Religion against the superstitious and idolatrous corruptions of it; at a period when, that people alone excepted, all mankind had apostatized from the worship of the true God. "Ye shall be holy unto me, (said God to the children of Israel,) for I the Lord am holy; and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine." Lev. xx. 26.—At the same time the Law kept in memory, through the medium of its typical service,

service, the promise of the Messiah made to their fathers; by leading their thoughts forward to that Person in whom the Promise was to be fulfilled.

The Law was added, in another sense, "because of transgressions;" that being convinced, that, by the Law, *as a rule of life*, all men are concluded under sin; the Jews might be prepared to welcome the appearance of that Divine Person, who was the end of the Law for justification, to every one that believeth." Rom. x. 3.—"The Law (says the Apostle in this sense) worketh wrath." Rom. iv. 15.—It was partly intended that it should do so: in order that those who lived under it, might be led forward to a *better hope*. And in this point of view, the Law was, what the Apostle calls it, "*a Schoolmaster*" to bring the Jews to Christ.

Such being the important design of the Law, the ceremonial ritual of it was of course valuable only so far as it ministered to the purposes of its institution. It was originally imposed to restrain a self-willed and corrupted people from idolatry: on which account it had a continued reference

reference to the then reigning superstitions. But as this security from idolatry, was for the sake of preserving a sound and pure basis for the Christian Dispensation; it pleased Divine Wisdom that the Ceremonial Law should not only be directed against the prevailing superstitions; but should likewise be typical of the essential parts of that Dispensation, which it was designed to usher in. On this account it is to be expected that the ritual service of it, should have some marked reference to the particular character and office of the Person designed to be pointed out by it.

This was strikingly the case on the great day of expiation; when the High Priest under the Law went into the Holy of Holies, to sprinkle the blood of Atonement for himself and the people before the Lord; who appeared in the cloud upon the Mercy Seat." Lev. xvi. 2.

Now this service, with every thing that appertained to it, St. Paul expressly informs the Hebrews, in the ninth chapter of his Epistle to them, was *figurative* and *representative.*

On which account, God, who seeth the

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end from the beginning, who consequently in his institution of the Law, beheld its accomplishment in the Gospel; expressly provided, that the sacrifices offered on this important occasion should be slain by the Priest's own hand;* that the blood so slain should afterwards be brought by him into the Holy of Holies;† that He should not presume to enter that sacred place without blood at any time; nor even with blood but at this annual solemnity; that part of this blood should be sprinkled before the mercy seat, on which the Emblems of the divine Presence were placed: that he should afterwards sanctify the altar ‡ before the Lord by putting some of this consecrated blood upon it; and, lastly, that after the ceremonies relating to the Scape Goat were performed, the bodies of the bullock and goat slain for the sin offering, should be burnt with fire without the camp.§

Now all these things, according to the course of the Apostle's argument, were a

* Levit. xvi. 11. 15. † Exod. xxx. 10.—Levit. xvi. 10.—Heb. ix. 7. ‡ Levit. xvi. 18, 19. § Levit. xvi 28, 29.

figure

figure of Christ, and accomplished in him. The Holy of Holies on earth represented the residence of the Deity in heaven. The service that was performed in it, consequently represented the service that was to be performed in heaven. The High Priest under the Law, therefore, represented the person of our great High Priest and Intercessor on this occasion; and the blood which he sprinkled before the Cherubim on the mercy seat, was the Type of that blood, the merits of which our great High Priest, when "entered within the vail," Heb. vi. 19. was afterwards to plead before his heavenly Father. "Christ (says the Apostle) is not entered into the holy place made with hands, i.e. into the Holy of Holies in the Temple, "which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, (the actual residence of the Deity) there to appear in the presence of God for us." Heb. ix. 24. And, as the High Priest on earth was not permitted to enter into the Holy of Holies on the great day of atonement, "without blood of others;" so his great Antitype, Jesus Christ, "being become an High Priest of good things to

come," qualified his human nature for an entrance into the holy place in heaven, by the offering of his own blood. Each High Priest acted under a public character, each sustaining the persons of those whom he represented. The High Priest under the Law " offered for himself, and the errors of the people." Our great High Priest under the Gospel " appeared in the presence of God *for us*:" whilst the burning the sin offering without the Camp, answers to Christ's suffering without the gate of Jerusalem.

As the covenant for the redemption of fallen man was, by divine direction to be typically exhibited on earth, with the view of preserving the true faith in the world, by directing the eye of the sacrificer to its proper object; it necessarily followed, that such an exhibition must be performed, before the Emblems appointed to represent the divine presence. For God literally speaking, dwelleth not in temples made with hands. " The heavens (saith the Lord) is my throne, and the earth is my footstool; where is the house that ye build unto me?" Isaiah lxvi .1. Still we find God

God giving express direction to Moses, relative to the building of the Tabernacle, in the following words. " Let them make me a Sanctuary, according to all that I shew thee after the pattern, that I may *dwell* among them." Exod. xxv. 8.

Now there are two senses, a *literal* and a *figurative* sense; in one of which every writing is to be understood, if it is to be understood at all. When, therefore, the Holy of Holies is called the *Sanctuary*, the *dwelling-place* or *residence* of the Deity; it must necessarily be understood, in a *figurative* sense, to be a Type of heaven. Consequently the Figures or Emblems, which were ordered to be set up in the holy place, of which a particular description is given in the letter of the Law, must have been patterns, or representations of things in the heavens. In conformity with which idea, after having reminded the Hebrews to whom he was writing, that all things by the Law were purged with the blood of calves and of goats offered in sacrifice; the Apostle proceeds to observe, that " it was necessary that the *patterns* of things in the heavens should be

purified with these; but the *heavenly things themselves*, (the *Divine Realities*, which those patterns were intended to represent), with better sacrifices than these." Heb. ix. 23.

" Jesus Christ then being become an High Priest of good things to come, entered not (says the Apostle) into the Holy of Holies on earth, with the blood of calves and of goats; but after his sacrifice on the Cross, he " entered once into the holy place in heaven." Heb. ix. 11, 12. " If he were on earth, (observes the Apostle) he should not be a Priest; seeing, or because there are Priests that offer gifts according to the Law." Heb. viii. 4. The *shadow* and the *reality* could not, according to the divine plan, co-exist under the same Dispensation. When our blessed Saviour, therefore, having yielded up his life on the Cross, entered into heaven to offer his own blood for man's redemption, the Priesthood of the Law virtually ceased, and his own unchangeable Priesthood commenced; by the efficacy of which, " he is able to save, to the uttermost, them that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth

liveth to make intercession for them." Heb. vii. 25.

Such a mode of reasoning addressed to the Hebrews, on the supposition that they had retained the least idea of the typical nature of their Temple service, was unanswerable. If the *reality*, of what their Law exhibited but the *shadow*, was actually accomplished, the use of the Law was necessarily superseded. When that which is perfect was come, that which is imperfect, according to the verdict of common sense, was of course to be done away. In its reference, therefore, to the full and final accomplishment of its Ritual service in the great propitiatory sacrifice on the Cross, the whole value of the Ceremonial Law consisted. Abstracted from this, it was a formal, unmeaning, and consequently unprofitable exhibition.

The same idea, therefore, which gave value to the sacrifice of Abel, and accompanied the sprinkling the blood of the lamb on the door posts of those who were delivered from the destroying angel, previous to their departure from Egypt; signifying, that deliverance from the guilt

and

bondage of sin, was not, according to the Covenant of Grace, to be effected, but *by shedding of blood*; was intended to be kept alive in the services of the Law; for the purpose of leading those who lived under it to the knowledge of that Divine Person, who " by one offering of himself hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." Heb. x. 14.

And for this reason, in allusion to the method, by which, according to the divine plan, this sanctification was to be effected, " all things by the Law were purged with blood, and without shedding of blood there was no remission." Heb. ix. 22.

Now common sense might be supposed competent to have informed the Jews, that blood *literally* applied, must, instead of cleansing any thing, add rather to its defilement. Had they not, therefore, lost sight of the spiritual meaning of their Law, they must have concluded, that the blood of sacrifice, applied for the purpose of purgation, was the *sign*, but could not possibly be the *thing signified*. And because the life of every animal is in the blood,

blood, that on that account it was an appointed emblem of the benefit derived to the sacrificer from that promised Seed of the Woman, whose death, according to the eternal purpose, was to cleanse mankind from the defilement of sin. "The life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar, to make an *atonement for your souls;* for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." Levit. xvii. 11.

According to this idea, (which prevailed in the mind of the faithful under the old Dispensation, who with Abraham looked forward to the day of Christ, and rejoiced in it in hope;) one of the names by which the Messiah is distinguished in the Old Testament, is that of the *Purifier* ברית: the same word, which in some other passages of Scripture is translated *soap:* the known property of which is to cleanse and purify. "Though thou wash me with nitre, and take thee much soap, ברית, thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord." Jer. ii. 22. And again in that striking passage of the prophet Malachi. "Who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall

shall stand when he appeareth? For He is like the refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap בּוֹרִית.—Here the Messiah, under the significant emblem of a refiner's fire and fuller's soap, is pointed out in the character of that *Divine Purifier*, whose office it is, in a spiritual sense, to cleanse and purify mankind from the defilement of sin.

In allusion to this his important character of *Purifier*, the saints who are described in the Book of Revelation as arrayed in white robes, are said to have *washed* their robes, and made them *white in the Blood* of the Lamb. Rev. vii. 14. Garments, by being washed in *blood*, cannot, in a literal sense be made *white*. But when it is considered that Sin, in the figurative language of Scripture, is the spiritual defilement of the Soul; and that it is through the Sacrifice offered on the Cross that Man, rendered impure by the Fall, is restored to a state of purity in the Eyes of God; we can be at no loss to understand the Apostle, when he says, that "if we walk in light, the blood of Christ *cleanseth* us from all Sin:"—and consequently, in what sense the Robes of the sinner

sinner are made *white*, by being washed in the *blood* of the Lamb.

Thus does the Bible, from the beginning of it to the end, direct the eye of the faithful to the same divine object of Christian hope; from Abel's offering in Paradise, through the representative service of the Law, down to the actual fulfilment of it by the personal sacrifice of Christ on the Cross; and the effect produced by that great event, in the emblematic description of the saints, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in *white robes*.

When, therefore, Christ Jesus appeared in the flesh, he who was sent to prepare the way before him; in other words, to prepare the Jews for his immediate reception; described Him by his most significant title of "the Lamb of God;" "Behold (said he) the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world."—As if he had said; Behold the great Purifier of mankind. Behold that divine Person whom the Prophet has told you should be brought as a lamb to the slaughter, when it shall please his Father to make his soul

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an offering for sin. Isaiah liii.—Behold the true Paschal Lamb, to whom all the typical service of the Law was designed to lead you. Behold the Lamb of God, slain in the Divine Councils before the world began; who, in the fulness of time, shall, with *his own Blood*, enter once into the holy place not made with hands; that through the eternal spirit "offering himself without spot to God, he may purge your consciences from dead works to serve the living God." Heb. ix. 14.

Thus has it been shewn in what sense Jesus Christ is made unto us *Sanctification*. *He* came into the world, (as he himself said) not to destroy the Law but to fulfil it. This commission he executed partly in his character of *Sanctifier*. To the Jew he rendered the law perfect by filling it up: and at the same time furnishing, in his own divine Person, that true sanctification, of which the purifications of the Law were designed as figures for the time being. To lead the Jewish nation to this important conclusion, our Saviour, when expiring on the Cross, made use of these striking words: "*It is finished.*" As if he had said, the work

work which I covenanted to perform on earth is compleated. At the same time the vail of the Temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.

The Apostle tells us, that by the High Priest on earth entering within the vail into the second tabernacle with blood once every year, the Holy Ghost signified "that the way into the holiest of all was *not yet* made manifest." Heb. ix. 8. The circumstance, therefore, of this vail being rent from top to bottom, at the death of Christ, was intended, it it presumed, to convey, in the same symbolic language, this important idea; that at the death of Christ, the way into the holiest of all, was really made manifest; and that therefore the emblematic service, which had hitherto been performed within the vail of the tabernacle on earth, was no longer necessary to be continued. The scene was now changed from earth to heaven; where the great work of atonement was in future to be carried on by that spotless High Priest, who with his own blood was ascended into heaven for that gracious purpose.

In this sense, then, Jesus Christ became the

the true sanctifier of his chosen people. Whilst the Gentile, through the preaching of his Gospel, was rescued from the gross impurity of the superstitious worship to which he had been accustomed, by which the glory of the incorruptible God had been changed, through the suggestions of the devil, into images made like to corruptible man, to birds, beasts, and creeping things."

In a general sense, both to Jew and Gentile, that is, to every member of the Christian Church, Jesus Christ is made *sanctification*, by virtue of his having appeared once in the end of the world, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself: and in consequence of that abundant effusion of his spirit shed abroad under the Christian Dispensation, by which that *real purity* of heart and mind is effected, which the *ritual* purifications of the Law were designed to typify; and to which all the appointed means of grace under the Gospel are designed to lead.

The short view which has been here taken of a most important subject, bears testimony to the plan of divine wisdom in the

the covenant of Grace, sufficient, it is presumed, to establish the faith, and direct the practice of every Christian Professor. For, short as it is, it makes the Bible speak a consistent language from Genesis to Revelations; directing the attention of the reader to the same divine object of Christian hope, from the revelation of the promised Seed to Adam in Paradise, through the shadows of the Law, to its actual completion in the person of Jesus Christ; "who for us men and for our salvation came down from Heaven, was incarnate by the Holy Ghost, and crucified under Pontius Pilate." Who, in correspondence with the figurative language of the Prophet, by which he is described as coming "with dyed garments from the *vintage*, red in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength, speaking in righteousness, and mighty to save," is represented in the Book of Revelations, as "clothed in a vesture dipped in Blood;" the emblematic memorial of the bloody work which He had performed for Man, and his name, (as the Divine Revelation proceeds to inform us) "is called *the Word of God*. And

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He hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of Kings and Lord of Lords." Rev. xix. 16.

The correspondence between the symbol of the Old Testament, and the letter of the New is well worthy of remark; because it bears striking testimony to the consistency of the divine plan, in the execution of the Christian Covenant.

The Cherubim, it has been observed, were set up at the east of the Garden of Eden, immediately after the Fall. This same emblematic representation was afterwards made from a pattern expressly delivered by God to Moses, and in process of time, to David for the religious service of the Tabernacle and Temple. The particular construction of the Cherubim was also revealed to Ezekiel in a vision. Under this emblematic representation, Divine Wisdom was pleased to convey that knowledge of spiritual things, necessary to give effect to the worship of those, who lived under the Dispensations, preceding that which commenced with the ministry of Jesus Christ.

This latter Dispensation graciously exchanged

changed the symbol of Christianity for the letter of it: that Divine Mystery emblematically represented under the figure of the Cherubim having been clearly revealed, in the Incarnation of one of the Divine Persons in the Godhead; and the subsequent direction given to the Apostles to baptize all nations in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; those *three Great Ones*, who had engaged themselves in Covenant for the redemption of fallen Man.

In proceeding to the revelation of things that are to come to pass at the end of days; when the Patriarch, the Jew, and the Christian shall be assembled before the throne; we find the symbol and the letter blended together: we behold the Son of Man, the typical Lamb under the Law, who had been slain for the sins of mankind, standing in the midst of the throne, and of the four Beasts, or rather living creatures; which, according to the testimony of Ezekiel, were intended to exhibit "the appearance of the likeness of the Glory of the Lord," Ezek. i. 28.—under those Dispensations, in which God thought

thought fit to convey divine knowledge through a *symbolical* medium; as if, by bringing into one point of view the different parts of the Divine Œconomy in the work of Redemption, to convey this essential idea; that in the character and office of Jesus Christ, each Dispensation of Grace had received its accomplishment.

Whoever then can fairly read his Bible, and conclude that all that apparatus of divine wisdom, (if it may be so called) manifested in the Dispensations preparatory to the perfection of the Gospel, was made use of for the purpose of introducing Jesus Christ into the world, in the sole character of a *moral teacher*, must have a vail before his eyes, as thick as that, which is judiciously suffered still to remain before the eyes of the carnal Jew. To us, (on whom we trust the light hath shined,) the divinity of the promised seed, that "Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world; who, in the Book of Revelations is called "the *Word of God*;" which Word, St. John in his history expressly tells us "*was God*;" appears to be written, as it were with a sun-beam, in almost every page of the Sacred

cred Scripture. It is the substance of the Law, the Spirit of Prophecy, and the perfection of the Gospel. That divine Person, the only ground for hope to fallen man, we trace in every Dispensation. By the light of the Gospel, we see him in the ceremonials of the Jewish Ritual, as clearly as we behold Him in the appointed ordinances of the Christian Church. And seeing Him as we do, we tremble for the condition of those in an enlightened country, who see Him not. Whatever flattering ideas they may annex to their due acknowledgment of God in his character of Creator and Governor of the world, and to the conscientious discharge of moral duties; yet certain it is, from the general tenor of Revelation, that "without shedding of blood there is no remission." If he that despised Moses' Law, died without mercy, under two or three witnesses, of how much sorer punishment shall they be thought worthy, who have trodden under foot the Son of God, and counted the blood of the Covenant an unholy thing? For their sacrifice, however perfect in its kind, resembles not the sacrifice of Abel,

which was accepted; but that of Cain, which was rejected; because it was not a sacrifice in correspondence with the covenant of Grace. With this conviction on our minds, we have but to offer up our earnest prayers to God, for those who now sit in darkness; that the eyes of their understanding being opened, they may be brought acquainted with the fulness of Divine Wisdom in the great mystery of Redemption; and thereby become prepared to join in that new song, which shall, at the end of time, be sung to the honour of the Redeemer; on the consideration, that it is "*through Him alone*, that there is access to the Father." "I beheld (says St. John in a vision) and lo! in the midst of the throne and of the four Beasts, and in the midst of the Elders, stood a *Lamb*, as it had been slain: and He came, and took the Book out of the right hand of Him, that sat upon the throne. And when He had taken the book, the four beasts, and four-and-twenty elders, fell down before the Lamb: and they sung a new song, saying; Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for *Thou*

wast

DISCOURSE VI.

1 COR. i. 30.

Who of God is made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption.

THESE words (it was observed on a former occasion) furnish a summary description of the nature and genius of that Religion, which Christ came to propagate in the world. They discover the fulness of that divine grace, which has been manifested in the character and office of Jesus Christ, considered as the Revealer of all true wisdom; the Fountain of all true righteousness; the Sanctifier, and Redeemer of fallen man. In every part of his divine character and office Jesus Christ must be received by all, who would derive benefit from Him. For the History of Religion,

Religion, so far as it respects the knowledge of a Divine Creator, and the duty of man as a created accountable being, unaccompanied with the grace of the Gospel, opens our eyes only to the misery of our fallen condition, and the consequent certainty of condemnation. This statement stamps an unusual degree of importance on the words before us; considered in their immediate relation to that Divine Person, who must be received by man in the same compleat character, which, according to the œconomy of grace he hath been pleased to assume for man; even that Holy One, " who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

In what sense Jesus Christ is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification, has been already shewn. We proceed therefore, in conformity with the text, to speak of Him in the remaining part of his character; as the Redeemer of fallen man. He " is made unto us (says the Apostle), wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and *redemption*."—Redemption pre-supposes captivity in bondage: for

where

where there is no bondage, there can be no redemption. To say, then, that Jesus Christ was made unto us *redemption*; is a virtual acknowledgement of man's captive condition previous to that event. Consequently an enquiry into the testimony borne by Scripture to the nature of man's fallen condition, and his consequent captivity; together with the adequacy of the means employed to recover him from it; must constitute the most interesting employment of the human mind; and if fairly made, can lead, it is presumed, but to one and the same Christian conclusion.

Man (we are given to understand) was created a perfect being; but in the possession of freedom to determine his own actions; either by obedience to continue in his original perfection, or by disobedience to fall from it. He was at the same time placed in a state of earthly happiness in Paradise; which was designed to pre-figure, as well as prepare him for that more compleat state of blessedness, to which he was to be removed at the expiration of his earthly trial. The condition of the covenant under which Adam was admitted

mitted a tenant in Paradise, and on the fulfilment of which his continuance in that original state of perfection depended, was perfect obedience. Had Adam remained in innocence, by eating of the Tree of Life placed in the midst of the garden, he had never known death. But by transgressing, through the suggestion of the devil, the command of his Maker, the condition of the covenant under which Adam was originally placed being broken, he was in consequence turned out of Paradise; because all right of access to the Tree of Life, in his character of an innocent creature, was now lost. "Thus by one man (says the Apostle) sin entered into the world, and death by sin: and so death passed upon all men." Rom. v. 12.—"For God created man to be immortal; and made him to be an image of his own eternity: nevertheless, through envy of the devil came death into the world." Wisd. of Sol. ii. 43.

But by wilful disobedience, not only the immortality, for which Adam had been created, became forfeited, but all possibility of his recovering it was also lost; in consequence

consequence of that captivity to sin and Satan, under which the fall left him. This mortal, captive, disabled condition, did Adam, without help or hope in himself, entail, as the representative of mankind, on all his posterity. "Thus in Adam all died."

Such is the account of man's original condition, prior to, and immediately subsequent to the fall; as it is to be collected from the pages of divine Revelation. The devil, in consequence of rebellion, had lost his first estate; and was left without any hope of its recovery. His sin, in consideration of his exalted nature, it is presumed, was of that aggravated kind as to preclude all idea of pardon. The devil therefore found no Redeemer. Thus circumstanced, his malice and envy were exerted against God's newly favoured creature, with the view of frustrating the design of his creation. Having therefore succeeded against Adam in drawing away his allegiance from his Maker, he triumphed in the thought, that he had rendered his condition equally desperate with his own. To the justice of God, under which

which he was suffering, he found himself unable to make any satisfaction; he flattered himself therefore that his rival creature man, whom he considered less able to do it, was rendered at least as miserable as himself.

But the event of the devil's malice having been foreseen, a remedy had, in the wisdom of the divine councils, been prepared against the effects of it. According to an eternal purpose, the great mystery of Godliness settled before the foundation of the world, had for its object, to counteract the evil the devil should work; by providing for the recovery of God's fallen creature. It had been graciously determined, that man should be delivered from his bondage under sin and Satan; and restored on certain conditions to his forfeited inheritance.

For the accomplishment of this gracious purpose, one of the three Persons in the Godhead took on himself the office of *Redeemer*; that in that character he might pay down the ransom necessary on the occasion. "We were *redeemed*, (says the Apostle) with the precious blood of Christ,

as

as of a lamb without blemish and without spot; who verily was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world. 1. Pet. i. 18. according to the divine purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began." 2. Tim. ii. 9.

The devil thinking, it is presumed, that as justice must be unchangeable, and cannot acquit without adequate satisfaction being made to it; and that satisfaction must be proportionate to the condition of the party against whom the sin has been committed; knowing at the same time that God was an *infinite* being, and that Adam was far from being *such*; consequently that no satisfaction in this case could be made; his conclusion, it is probable, might be, that the situation of fallen man was without a remedy; and that therefore he had prevailed against God, in becoming instrumental to the ruin of his new creation. But the devil was permitted thus far to triumph, in order that the inexhaustible riches of divine grace, wisdom, and power might be more fully manifested, in the perfect recovery of fallen man; and the final overthrow of that spi-

ritual enemy who had prevailed against him. The ever adorable mystery of God manifest in the flesh, removed all those insuperable difficulties, which the sanguine thoughts of the devil had thrown in the way of man's recovery to his lost estate. For according to this mystery of Godliness, satisfaction was made by the same nature that had transgressed; and that satisfaction was full and adequate to the purpose, because the person who made it, was God as well as man: and though the Godhead cannot die, yet that Person, in whom we are told, "the fulness of the Godhead dwelt bodily," actually did die; and by that death in the character of the *second Adam*, recovered what had been lost by the *first*. In this sense, "*the last Adam*," that second representative of human nature, "the Lord from heaven," "was made a quickening spirit."—"For as in Adam all die; even so, in like manner, or to the same extent, in Christ shall all be made alive." 1. Cor. xv. 22. 45.

To this gracious plan of Redemption from the bondage of sin and Satan, all communication between God and man

subsequent

subsequent to the fall had a marked reference. Considered as the great hinge on which the whole œconomy of man's Salvation turned, it was to be expected that it should be brought forward to notice on every possible occasion; with the view of making that impression on the human mind, which might prepare it for the actual accomplishment of the Redeemer's work, when the fulness of time should arrive. From the first revelation therefore of the future Redemption of man delivered to Adam in Paradise, when God vouchsafed to him a short declaration of the gracious provision that had been made in his favour, in that appointed Seed which was to bruise the serpent's head; under every Dispensation, references accommodated to the condition of the parties, and in terms more or less obscure, were continually made to this important event.

The bondage of God's chosen people in Egypt was an emblem of the state of fallen man; as their delivery from the destroying angel through the sprinkling of the blood of the Paschal Lamb, was a type of the deliverance of the redeemed from the

bondage of sin and Satan by Jesus Christ. —The ritual service of the Law was designed to furnish a more circumstantial representation of this great event; under which figurative Dispensation, the blood of the victim considered as an expiation for the sin of the offerer, exhibited a lively representation of the spiritual redemption of man, from the consequences of sin by the blood of the *Redeemer*.

The language of the Prophets, as the language of inspiration, must be expected to have the same great subject in view. When Isaiah therefore describes the office of the promised Messiah, he does it by an allusion to the year of Jubilee, which by express command was celebrated on the periodical return of every fiftieth year; in which, according to the provision of the Law, liberty was proclaimed throughout the land of Judea unto all the inhabitants; and every man returned into his own possession, and into his own family; and a general redemption of property took place. Levit. xxv. And that the reference which this temporal redemption on every year of Jubilee had to that spiritual Redemption, which

which was in the fulness of time to be effected by our great Redeemer, might not escape observation; it was commanded, that the trumpet which was to give notice of the returning celebration of this joyful year, should be sounded on the great day of Atonement; on that day, when the High Priest under the Law, was engaged in sprinkling before the mercy-seat in the Holy of Holies *, the type of that precious blood, which was in the fulness of time to be offered up by our great High Priest under the Gospel, for the Redemption of the world.

" The Spirit of the Lord (says the Prophet) is upon me; because he hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted; to proclaim liberty to the captives; and the opening of the prison door to them that are bound. To proclaim the *acceptable year* of the Lord." Isa. lxi.

The interpretation of this prophecy, was determined by our Saviour on a memor-

* Or as it might be better rendered, *the Holy place*

able occasion; when, after having quoted in the Synagogue this remarkable passage from the Prophet, we read, that " he closed the book and sat down. And the eyes of all that were in the Synagogue being fastened upon him, he began to say; This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears." Luke iv. 20. As if he had said; " Behold, the year of my redeemed is come:" that acceptable year of the Lord, of which the Jubilee under the Law exhibited but a faint shadow: a year of general redemption and restoration to their lost estate for the sons of fallen Adam, by virtue of that ransom which I come to pay. For this purpose has a body been prepared me. " Rejoice therefore O Daughter of Zion; shout, O Daughter of Jerusalem; behold thy King cometh unto thee; he is *just and having salvation;* and he shall speak peace unto the heathen; and his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth. As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant, I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit, wherein is no water. Turn ye therefore to the *strong hold*, ye prisoners of hope,

Hope, even to day do I declare, that I will render double unto thee. Zec. ix. 9. " for I am thy strength and thy Redeemer."

With this great subject on his mind, the Prophet gives the following sublime description of the same divine Personage. " Who is this (says he) that cometh with dyed garments from the vintage? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength?—I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.—Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine fat?—I have trodden the wine press alone, and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury, and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold; therefore mine own arm brought Salvation unto me." Isaiah lxiii.

And as the service of the Law was de-

signed to prefigure, and the language of the Prophets to predict the future Redemption of mankind, with the view of preparing those who lived under the Jewish Dispensation, for the personal appearance of the promised Redeemer; so the preaching of the Apostles was calculated to keep alive in the minds of their disciples the memorial of the great work, which in the fulness of time had been actually accomplished by Him. "There is one God (says the Apostle) and one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus. Who gave himself a Ransom for all."—1 Tim. ii. 5.—"When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Gal. iv. 5. When the full season, according to the divine councils, arrived; when the promise, made to Abraham and his seed was to take place; God sent into the world his only begotten Son, the seed of the woman, made subject to the Mosaic law; that fulfilling the Law by his perfect obedience, he might redeem the Jews from their bondage

to it, and by so doing place both Jew and Gentile in possession of the original promise; "That in Abraham's seed all the families of the earth should be blessed."—And this blessing when perfected, consisted in that Salvation through faith which had been purchased by the blood of a Redeemer.—"Forasmuch as ye know (says the Apostle) that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb, without blemish and without spot." 1 Pet. i. 18.

In conformity with this idea, the members of Christ's Church which has been purchased with his blood, are represented by the Apostle as no longer belonging to themselves. Having been redeemed from the bondage of sin and death, they are become, by right of purchase, the property of their Redeemer. "Ye are not your own, (says the Apostle to his disciples at Corinth,) for ye *are bought with a price*; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's"

The body and spirit of man, in consequence of the fall, having been as it were

sold under sin, had thereby become the property of that Evil One, by whom the fatal price of man's liberty had been offered to him with success. But through the love of God, man found a ransom from captivity in that spotless Lamb, " which has been slain, and has redeemed us by his blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people and nation." Rev. v. 9.

We read of a redemption from Egypt; but that, as it has been above observed, was a figure only of the eternal Redemption to be obtained through Christ. At the redemption from Egypt, a lamb without blemish was ordered to be slain; the blood of which, sprinkled on the door posts, saved the Israelites from the destroying angel, when the first-born of Egypt were slain. This lamb afterwards eaten, was characterised by the distinguishing title of " *the Lord's Passover*," on the following very memorable account. " For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgement: I am the Lord. And the-

the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where you are; and when I see the blood, I will *pass over* you, and the plague shall not be upon you, to destroy you when I smite the land of Egypt." Exod. xii. 12. But St. Paul addressing himself to his disciples at Corinth, calls "Christ, *our Passover*."—"Christ our Passover (says he) is sacrificed for us." 1 Cor. v. 6.—What then the Passover was to the Israelites at their redemption from Egypt, that Christ *our Passover*, is to Christians; otherwise St. Paul's language is something worse than incorrect; for, on the supposition that he made an allusion, where there was no resemblance, he took the readiest way to lead his disciples into error on the most important subject of his ministry. St. Paul, as an intelligent Jew, could not have been ignorant on this head. The word *passover* therefore, as belonging to our Saviour, could not have been misapplied by him.—The blood of the Paschal Lamb we know was *expiatory;* it was accepted for the saving of God's people; when the idolatrous Egyptians were destroyed by the Destroyer. If Christ then

is

is *our Passover*, as he is here declared to be, his blood must be accepted for a similar purpose. And this the Apostle expressly asserts on another occasion where he says, that "in *Him we have Redemption through his blood;* the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his Grace." Eph. i. 7.

Thus Jesus Christ, in his character of Redeemer, constitutes the perfection of every Divine Dispensation: that compleat consummation, in which all the lines of Providence, relative to the condition of fallen man, were designed to meet. The great subject of vicarious atonement introduced by the fall; the nature of which, the instituted service of sacrifice was designed to explain and to commemorate; hath appeared, though with different degrees of clearness, both to Patriarch, Jew, and Christian.

The shedding the blood of an innocent victim was an acknowledgement of the forfeiture of the life of the party, for whose redemption it was shed. To keep this important idea alive; the ceremony of laying the hand on the head of the beast brought to be slain, thereby to signify that the

the sins of the offerer were discharged on the devoted victim, was constantly observed. Lev. iv. Nor could there be any possible misconception on this head, so long as the Jews attended to the bare letter of their law. The reason given for prohibiting the Jews from eating "any manner of blood" being expressly this; "For the life of the flesh, says God, is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make an atonement for your souls; for it is the *blood* that maketh an atonement for the soul." Lev. xvii. 11. A prohibition which we conceive is to be thus accounted for. God the Giver of life, and to whom it had been forfeited by sin, afterwards reserved to himself that part, which is the principle of life: and thereby excluded from common use what was sanctified to so noble a purpose. This principle of life then being separated for the altar, implies that in every atonement, there was an exchange of one life for another. That of the offering, for his life in whose behalf it was offered. Such is indeed the true and obvious sense of those terms still remaining in the Jewish books; whereby the evils and punishments

punishments acknowledged to be justly incurred by the sacrificer himself, are most solemnly imprecated upon the sacrifice; and earnest supplication made, that the creature so devoted may be the ransom and propitiation of his soul.

In strict conformity with which idea, St. Paul, speaking of Christ says, that by Him "we have now received the *atonement*." Rom. v. 11.—The word καταλλαγη here translated *atonement*, according to its derivation, signifies a *commutation* or *exchange* between contracting parties of one person or thing instead of another. Hence it comes to signify that reconciliation, which has been effected between God and man, by the substitution of the life of Jesus Christ for that of the condemned sinner.

The blood of the victim then made an atonement for the soul of the offerer: blood, which, in the eye of the faithful, could have no other virtue than what it derived from its appointed relation to that precious blood, which was in the fulness of time to take away sin.

In like manner, the offering up that commemorative sacrifice which characterizes

izes the Christian altar, is an acknowledgement on our parts, that our lives were forfeited, and have been redeemed by the body and blood of Christ actually offered up on the Cross. Bread and wine are but the instituted emblems, deriving all their spiritual efficacy from the relation they bear to that important transaction which they were appointed to represent.

Thus the typical sacrifice of the Jewish Temple, and the commemorative one of the Christian Church, direct our thoughts to the same divine object of contemplation; each, in its peculiar way, furnishing a figurative exhibition of the recovery of man from the effects of the fall, through the mediation of that divine Person, who by the all-sufficient sacrifice of himself became the Redeemer of a lost world.

The only difference between the Levitical and Christian Priesthood is this: that the *former* offered up representative sacrifices, which on account of their inefficacy to take away sin, were continually repeated, with the view of keeping alive the sense of sin, and directing the eye of the sinner forward to a more perfect atonement: whilst the

the *latter* offers up the appointed commemoration of that one great Sacrifice on the Cross, which, because it was "a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the world, is on that account never to be repeated. For, to make use of the Apostle's mode of reasoning, "had righteousness come by the Law;" could the legal sacrifices have taken away sin, and "rendered the comers thereunto perfect;" Christ "would have died in vain." Gal. ii. 21. In such case there would have been no occasion for his death: for in such case, by a proper conformity to the Law, man might have redeemed himself. But "what the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and making him a sacrifice for sin, thereby condemning sin in the flesh, God did."—Rom. viii. 3, 4.—"When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the Law, to *redeem* them that were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of sons; and if sons, then heirs of God through Christ."—Gal. iv. 4.

Thus

Thus has it been shewn in what sense Jesus Christ is made unto us *Redemption*. In one word, " He has redeemed us from the curse of the Law, himself being made a curse for us."—And that title to life and immortality lost at the fall, with the precious price of his blood he has bought back for us again, on the gracious conditions of the Gospel: namely, repentance from dead works; faith in his merits, and obedience to his commands. Let us but receive this divine Person in his complex character of Prophet to teach, Priest to atone, and King to govern; and we shall have cause to rejoice in the God of our Salvation; who, by removing every stumbling block which the malice of our spiritual enemy had thrown in our way, has, in so doing, still rendered it possible for fallen creatures to become, consistently with divine justice, partakers with Him in glory.

This is placing Christianity on its own foundation; on that foundation which no man can lay, but which was graciously laid for him in the Divine Councils before the world began; and on which alone the security

curity of his superstructure depends. This plan of Redemption makes divine Revelation speak, as it might be expected it should speak, an uniform and consistent language through all its parts; pointing out under every Dispensation, the same divine object of consolation to fallen man. It exhibits to us one great mysterious scheme of Redemption from the effects of the fall, in which each Person in the Godhead condescended to take a part; travelling on through several progressive stages of maturity, to its final and perfect accomplishment in the character and office of Jesus Christ.—" In whom all the promises of God to man are *Yea* and *Amen*:" i. e. have their full and determinate completion.

This is a subject big with importance to every soul of man. Though, alas! it is a subject, which seldom meets with the attention, to which it is so justly entitled. If, as the general tenor of Scripture authorizes us to affirm, the great scheme of Redemption, so far as respects the work of the Redeemer in the flesh, has been compleated in the character and office of Jesus Christ

Christ on earth, this important scene of Providence is closed; and fallen man has no other plan of Salvation to expect. "For Jesus Christ, in that he died, died unto sin *once*; and having been raised from the dead, he dieth no more." Rom. vi. 9. 10. There remaineth, consequently, no more sacrifice for sin. Heb. x. 26.

Under these circumstances man is upon his last trial; the event of which must be final and irreversible. Considered in this light the doctrine of the Cross is a doctrine of universal and most interesting concern; as including under it the Salvation or condemnation of every man.

If then, (as we read) "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved, but the name of Jesus of Nazareth;"—Acts iv. 12. it cannot be a matter of indifference, in what character he is acknowledged. For should he not be acknowledged in that most prominent part of his character, in which he has been revealed, as the Redeemer of fallen man; he cannot be acknowledged to any saving purpose. Those therefore who in these enlightened days of the

the Gospel affect to receive Jesus Christ, in no other character than that of a Prophet sent from God, to improve what they understand by the religion of nature; by teaching a more compleat system of morality, than that of which the world was before in possession; or as an example of perfect righteousness set up for men to copy after; such persons receive Jesus Christ to their own condemnation; whilst they reject him in the only character in which Christ can stand them in any stead in the day of judgement. For in such case they have received from Christ a Law of religious and moral duty, by which they cannot be justified; because they do not keep it; and an example which must condemn them, because they do not imitate it. In the pride of human self-sufficiency they place themselves therefore on the same ground, on which Adam in his state of innocence was unable to stand: and by rejecting the plan of Salvation which has been graciously accommodated to their fallen condition, they challenge to themselves judgement unaccompanied with mercy.

This

This is a consideration (and a most awful consideration it is,) in which the Deist, the Socinian, and the self-righteous moralist of every description are equally concerned. For, if the Scripture doctrine of Redemption be true, (and if it is not, such a doctrine had not been revealed,) it follows, that Redemption from the consequences of the fall was absolutely necessary to the salvation of the fallen party; otherwise it would be inconsistent with the wisdom of the Deity, which doeth nothing in vain, that such a process should ever have taken place.

If then the testimony of Scripture be admitted, as furnishing evidence competent to the establishment of any revealed fact, (and to suppose otherwise is blasphemy in the extreme,) there is certainly no ground on which a reasonable doubt can be built relative to the subject before us. It has been clearly revealed, (in fact it constitutes the ground on which the mystery of godliness was built,) that man by original transgression fell under the sentence of the law, which pronounced a curse on every transgressor of it; and that in this condemned

demned condition, man has ever since continued. Now if no means have been adopted to take away this general curse, that curse must still remain; consequently in such case no man living can be capable of salvation.

But through grace it has been also revealed to us, that Jesus Christ "redeemed us from the curse of the Law, himself being made a curse for us."—At the same time we are expressly told that no man in this case can redeem *his* brother; and for this obvious reason, because man in his collective character is the party to be redeemed. When two persons are in bondage for a debt, which they are both equally unable to discharge; they must remain *in* bondage, till a third person be found, who is not only in a state of perfect solvency himself, but is moreover possessed of a sufficiency to spare for the relief of their distress. Jesus Christ therefore in his character of Redeemer could not be *mere* man: for, as man, by fulfilling the Law to the letter, he could only have saved himself: in such case it had been in vain for us to have looked for a *ransom* to him; who, though

though he had paid his own debt, had nothing to spare for the relief of his captive brethren. The fair logical inference from which premisses is, that Jesus Christ, to be competent to the great work of man's Redemption, must himself have been more than man.

But our conclusion in this case is not left to stand on the ground of mere logical inference; because the testimony borne by Scripture to this important subject is decided and unequivocal.

The Psalmist after observing, in reference to those who trusted in their riches, "that none of them could by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him," concludes with the following consolatory reflection. "*God* (says he) will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me." Ps. xlix. 7. Where the Apostle exhorted his disciples to glorify God in their body and spirit; the ground on which his exhortation was built was this; that they were God's *property*; having been bought by him with a price. God then was the purchaser of fallen man. But

we are informed by the same Apostle that the precious blood of Christ was the price paid for man's Redemption. " Jesus Christ (says he) by *his own blood*, entered once into the holy place, having obtained eternal Redemption for us." Heb. ix. 12. The necessary conclusion from which premisses is; that *in Jesus Christ* was perfected that mysterious connection, which according to the wisdom of the divine plan, was necessary to the completion of man's redemption. For had not Jesus Christ been man, he could not have shed his blood for the sins of man. And had he not been God, the blood which he shed for the Redemption of sinners had not been adequate to the purpose. In that compound character then in which Jesus Christ is described in Scripture as " the second Adam," and at the same time " *the Lord* from Heaven ;" 1 Cor. xv. 47.—as the son of man, and at the same time " the *Word of God* ;" and in *that alone*, was he qualified to answer to the interesting title, by which " the righteous branch raised unto David," was heretofore distinguished. " This is his name, whereby he shall be called," says the Prophet,

phet, "*The Lord our Righteousness.*" Jer. xxiii. 6.

When therefore we put this case together; considering on the one hand what a gracious God has done, to open the gate of everlasting life, which the fall of man had shut against him; and beholding on the other, self-sufficient man taking a leaf, if we may so say, out of the devil's book; setting up for independence, and daringly rejecting the proffered plan of Salvation through the medium of a crucified Redeemer; we tremble at the idea; and conclude with the Apostle, that we are at a loss to know "how they shall escape who neglect so great salvation."—For if the precious blood shed on the Cross availeth nothing in this case, most true it is that the Scripture holdeth forth no other prospect to sinful man, "but a certain fearful looking for of judgement and fiery indignation." Heb. x. 27.

But by a common abuse of language, unbelievers are often given credit for being wiser than other men; because they dissent from established opinions; as if wisdom consisted in *singularity*; or to *believe*,

lieve, was a reflection on the competency of man's rational faculty. On this head it may be sufficient to observe; whilst no folly is equal to the folly of those who pretend to be wise above what has been revealed; that it is as great an abuse of reason to reject a truth, capable of being proved by its own proper evidence, because we do not fully comprehend it, as it is a neglect of it to admit a truth, without the examination of any evidence at all. For, to reason, is to examine the truth or falsehood of any subject, by comparing it with its own proper evidence. But to determine on a subject abstracted from its evidence, as many do on the doctrines of Christianity, is not to *reason* so much as to *conjecture*: it is to suffer pride, prejudice, or interest, to take place of fair argument; and in such case, the conclusion drawn, will not be the conclusion of a sound head and unperverted understanding, but that of a corrupt heart, and licentious imagination.

With respect to the point at issue between unbelievers and Christians, we hesitate not, confidently to affirm, that no historical

historical facts whatever, of equal date, are so well authenticated, as those recorded in the Bible; nor is there any proposition in the whole circle of science more capable of satisfactory demonstration, than that Christian doctrine of Redemption, which the uniform tenor of Scripture conspires to illustrate and confirm; "to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself." 2 Cor. v. 19.

Those philosophers, as they are falsely called, who pride themselves in prejudging a cause, which they want either candour, honesty, or ability fairly to examine, are not to be reasoned with, so much as to be prayed for.

To members of the Christian Church, who, as such, professedly embrace the doctrine of Salvation through a crucified Redeemer, it may be proper to observe in conclusion; that as the danger of being wise *above* what is written is certainly very great; so the danger of being wise *against* what is written, is by no means inconsiderable. In the one case, man is led to *reject* the gracious plan of Salvation through Christ;

Christ; in the other to *abuse* it. To be wise unto Salvation, we must read the Bible as it is written; neither adding to, nor diminishing aught from the contents of that sacred Book; neither making mysteries where there are none, nor disbelieving those which have been revealed. As a divine Revelation, the whole of the Bible must be taken together: the design of it being to furnish that information on the great subject of Redemption, necessary to man under the different circumstances of his present state of trial. With this idea before them, the Apostles preached the Old Testament, compleated in the great subject of the New. A mode of preaching which can alone do justice to the consistency of the divine plan of Salvation; by making the spirit of God speak the same language from Genesis to Revelations.

When therefore it is considered that the work of Redemption was the voluntary act of the Reedeemer, in consequence of man's having forfeited his original state of happiness, and being rendered utterly incapable

capable of recovering it; it must be concluded, that the benefit to be derived from that gracious work, must depend, on a compliance with the conditions annexed to it.

To this end, the words of the text must be taken in their full extent. Jesus Christ must be made unto us not only *wisdom* and *righteousness*, but *sanctification* and *redemption*. He must not only be the fountain of all true wisdom, and righteousness; but the *sanctifier*, as well as the *Redeemer* of his fallen creatures. For though he has in a sense redeemed all mankind from the consequences of the fall; having "given himself *a Ransom for all*; yet will he prove a compleat Redeemer to none but those, who receive him in the fulness of his divine character and office. "By one offering of himself (says the Apostle) he hath perfected for ever them that are *sanctified*." Heb. x. 14.—These are important words. The obvious conclusion from them is; that, on the authority of Scripture, none must expect to be *perfecly* redeemed by the blood of Christ, who are not

not previously *sanctified* by his spirit. And unto them who in faith look for their Redeemer in that *salvable* condition; and unto *them only*, " shall he appear, the second time, without sin, unto Salvation." —Heb. ix. 28.

DISCOURSE

DISCOURSE VII.

ROM. VI. 23.

The Wages of Sin is Death; but the Gift of God is eternal Life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

THESE words furnish a compendious summary of Divine Revelation; so far as it respects the state of man previous to the fall, and his present state in consequence of that important event. The first position in the text, by reminding us of the condition on which the happiness of man originally depended, and the forfeiture which took place on that head; is calculated to prevent our adopting that plan of Salvation, which has already so notoriously miscarried. Whilst the concluding position in the text, points out in mercy the only plan on which eternal life is now to

to be obtained. The words of the text then, taken together, describe the nature of the Gospel Dispensation, connected with the reason for its gracious institution.— "The wages of sin is death." In conformity with this unequivocal position, whoever seeks eternal life as the reward due to service, must in reason expect to receive the wages which his service has earned.— Adam made a trial on this plan of judicial probation; and was condemned. The consequence then of this decided position, that "death is the wages of sin,"—and that these wages had actually become due to fallen man, constituted the ground on which the Evangelical Covenant was built. Nothing indeed can be more conclusive on the subjects to which they point, than the words of the text: which seem purposely opposed to each other, with the view of preventing all possibility of mistake on a matter of this primary importance: that, considering on what ground fallen man is to expect eternal life, he might not appear in the character of a presumptuous claimant demanding wages for service performed; but in that of an humble,

ble, penitent, and grateful Receiver of a free and undeserved gift.

"The *wages* of *sin* is *death*; but the *gift* of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

That the doctrine contained in this compendious summary of Revelation, is in substance to be found in every part of Scripture, as constituting the essence of the great mediatorial scheme; and the only doctrine, that, by harmonizing with that scheme, can make the Bible a consistent and intelligible book, it has been the design of some former discourses to prove. And it is in explaining this essential doctrine of Christianity in such a way, that the wages of sin shall become compatible with the gift of eternal life; the justice of the law, with the mercy of the lawgiver, that the important office of rightly dividing the word of truth chiefly consists. Such, in conformity with the words of the text, will be the object of the following discourse.

"In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."—Or as it may be translated, "dying thou shalt die." Such

was

was the sentence appropriate to the plan of Salvation, under which Adam was originally created. Had Adam acted in conformity to it, he would have saved himself; and in such case, by eating of the Tree of Life, he would have lived for ever. But having, through the temptation of Satan, failed upon the trial, and in consequence subjected himself to the sentence denounced; it became necessary, if grace was to be extended to him, that a new plan of Salvation, adapted to the circumstances of his condition, should be revealed; according to which, something was to be done for man, to put him into a capacity for Salvation, which man, in his fallen state, could not possibly do for himself. Adam's life was forfeited: and the justice of an offended God against sin, remained to be satisfied. No plan of Salvation therefore which admitted Adam to a future trial of obedience on any terms, could suit the exigency of his case, but such an one as effectually provided for this difficulty.

But this was that difficulty, (that *dignus vindice nodus*, if we may so call it,) which required

required the interposition of divine wisdom; a difficulty which, having been foreseen, produced in the divine mind that gracious plan, which, by reconciling the divine attributes of justice and mercy to each other, placed Adam on a more secure footing with respect to his future happiness, than that on which he stood before he fell. " I looked (said Christ by the mouth of his Prophet) and there was none to help; therefore mine own arm brought salvation." Isaiah lxiii. 5.

Had it been consistent with infinite justice (according to the idea of some reasoners,) to have remitted the sentence denounced against sin, and to have received fallen Adam on his giving proof of future obedience, supposing him to have been in a condition to perform it: in such case the doctrine of *vicarious* atonement had certainly not been found in Scripture. But Adam's natural inability to resist the evil Power, which had rebelled against God, and was now in arms against his creature, having been foreseen; the adoption of that sublime scheme of Salvation now called Christianity, became necessary for the purpose

purpose of disappointing the evil design of Satan, and of bringing Glory to God by a compleat triumph over him, in the final recovery of that chosen creature, who had fallen a sacrifice to his malice in such a manner, as left no room for objection against the equity of the divine proceeding. Oh! the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and goodness of God! How unsearchable are his judgements, and his ways past finding out?

Such then being the benign plan which the Persons in the Godhead condescended to form for the recovery of lost man; and this world having been created, that it might serve as a stage on which this great drama of redemption should be represented; it is to be concluded, that the same divine wisdom and love which contrived the stupendous scheme, should be engaged in providing for its perfect accomplishment. For this purpose, nothing was more necessary, than to impress on the mind of man that full sense of his fallen condition, which might induce him to conform with gratitude to the gracious plan that had been provided; and thereby prevent him from

from seeking Salvation in a way, in which it was no longer to be found. To this end, the sentence of death was to be kept constantly in view; that the forfeiture which had taken place, remaining fresh on the mind of the sinner, he might never lose sight of the gracious condition in which he was now placed.

Such, it is presumed, was the object of sacrifice; which as we have above observed, had its commencement with the Dispensation of grace; and immediately succeeded to the transgression, which demanded its atoning efficacy. The obvious design of it was to furnish a typical representation of the means by which, according to divine appointment, the sentence denounced against sin was to be done away. On this account, it was to accompany the new Dispensation through its different stages of advancement, for the purpose of supporting the hope, and preparing the mind of the fallen sinner for that fulness of time, when the promised Reality was to take place of the appointed Shadow.

The decided position in the text that "death is the wages of sin," was a position

tion written in characters of blood in every sacrifice that was offered up. To this sentence, every sacrificer considered himself obnoxious; the very essence of sacrifice being this, that the death of the animal was substituted for that of the sacrificing party. This essential idea which possessed the minds of the faithful under the Patriarchal dispensation, the ritual of the Mosaic Law (as it has been already observed) was instituted to preserve and confirm. With this view, the direction given to the offerer was, that he "should put his hand on the head of his burnt offering, and that in such case it should be accepted *for him*, to make atonement for him." Levit. i. 4.

But besides the daily service of the Jewish ritual, which had always the same object in view, that of doing away the continued effect of sin; it was ordained by the Law; doubtless, for the purpose of more strongly fixing in the mind of the worshipper the same important idea, on which the Salvation of man now turned; that on one solemn day in the year, the whole congregation, both priests and people should bear the

the most public testimony to the position in the text; that " *death is the wages of sin.*"

On this great and solemn day of general humiliation, both priests and people were required by an everlasting statute, to plead virtually guilty to the sentence that had been denounced against sin: the particular service of this day being expressly calculated to leave a stronger impression on the human mind, respecting the nature of sin and the manner in which its effect was, by divine appointment, to be done away, than if such ideas had been conveyed only by words. For on that day, the appointed atonement, by the sprinkling before the mercy-seat the blood of the sin-offering which had been slain, was accepted both for priests and people; " to cleanse them, that they might be clean from all their sins before the Lord." Levit. xvi. 30.—Whilst, for the more compleat satisfaction of the Jewish worshipper on this occasion, the High Priest proceeded to confess over the head of one of the two goats, which had been brought by the congregation of the Children of Israel, for

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the business of this day's solemnity, all the iniquities of the children of Israel and all their transgressions in all their sins; and putting them on the head of the live goat, sent him away as the *scape goat* for the Children of Israel into an uninhabited land. Levit. xvi. 21. A ceremony which carries with it so obvious an interpretation, as to render all comment on it unnecessary.

This essential idea of *vicarious* atonement, thus connected by Divine Providence with sacrifice, considered as a religious service, (for on no other ground is the propriety or reasonableness of sacrifice to be established,) made that strong and general impression on the public mind, which enabled it even to survive the corruption of the service to which it was annexed. The Heathens, when they departed from the knowledge of the true God, in consequence of their losing sight of the proper object to which sacrifice was originally directed, and corrupting the emblems which were designed to preserve the true faith in the world, carried away this idea of vicarious atonement with them,

and

and applied it to the service of their false Gods: their sacrifices * being uniformly considered, as the means of preventing the fatal consequence of sin, by propitiating the anger of their offended Deities, and providing for the offerers, through an appointed consecrated medium, a recovery to their lost favour and protection.

So that, whether this subject be traced through the dark and disgraceful annals of Heathenism, or through the luminous and instructive page of Revelation, the same important idea intended to be established by the representative service introduced at the fall, will be the prominent one; namely, that "*the wages of sin is death*:" and on that ground, the fallen sinner, not being in a condition to save himself, something consequently remained to be done for him in that state, for the purpose of rendering him acceptable to the professed object of his worship.

But, not to insist particularly on the general prevalence of this idea of vicarious atonement, as constituting the ground on

* Vide note at the end of this Discourse.

which,

which all sacrifice was built; it is sufficient for our purpose to prove, that the whole tenor of divine Revelation relative to man's Redemption, proceeds upon it; and that no other plan of Salvation but the Christian, through the blood of an atoning Mediator, can be consistent with it.

The sentence annexed to the Law delivered by Moses was this; "Cursed is he that confirmeth not (or as it should be translated,) continueth not in all the words of this Law to do them." Deut. xxvii. 26. —This sentence corresponded therefore with the position in the text, that "the wages of sin is death."

But, on this principle, as the Apostle argues, Gal. iii. 10. in reference to this judicial sentence of the Law, no man living can be justified, in the sight of God; all men being more or less sinners. The object the Apostle had in view on this occasion, was to convince the Galatians, that justification was not to be had by the Law, and therefore must be sought for in some other way. For the Law speaks not a word relative to *justification by faith*; but places it on quite a different foundation; namely,

namely, on a sinless perfect obedience to all the commands of it. On this account it is that St. Paul says, no man can be justified by it; because a Law cannot exist as such, independent of the judgement of the Lawgiver. If therefore we look not beyond the Law, we must be governed by the sanctions of it. And under such circumstances the case of fallen man is hopeless and without a remedy. For as our notions of the divine attributes, however imperfect they must be, can be taken only from some supposed resemblance to their corresponding qualities in the human mind, our ideas of divine and human justice must consequently bear strict analogy to each other; or there will be no sound ground for argument on this subject.

The end of all human justice is, or ought to be the moral government of society. To promote this necessary object, Laws have been promulgated. The judge in the court is the administrator of these Laws. Whatever disposition to mercy he may feel, his regard for justice and the general welfare of the community obliges him to deliver the sentence, which those laws have denounced

denounced against the crime in question. In which case, no repentance of the criminal opposes a bar to the execution of the sentence; nor is the consideration of his having broken that one law, by which he stands condemned, admitted in extenuation of his guilt. Was not the judicial process administered according to the letter, there would shortly be an end to all government in society.

The justice of the Divine Being must be seen in a similar point of view. His Law has been delivered for the moral government of intelligent and consequently accountable creatures; together with a penalty annexed, as a sanction for the security of its observance. Where then a law subsists, its condemning power must be in full force. Indeed, nothing can be considered to be either *good* or *evil*, so as to be matter of reward or punishment, but by some law; for "sin without the Law is dead." Rom. vii. 8. Whereas "the strength of sin is the Law." 1 Cor. xv. 56. It is the instrument by which sin prevails against man, to convict him of unrighteousness. Should we then confine our thoughts

thoughts to the divine attribute of justice alone, our ideas upon it must be consistent. God, as a God of justice, must proceed in conformity to the tenor of his own Law. To remit sin without punishment is *mercy*, but it is not *justice*. And the attributes of God must be all infinite and compleat. Death then having been declared by the Law to be the appointed wages of sin, and all men confessedly being transgressors of the Law, eternal life, as the gift of God to sinners, cannot consistently take place. For God, as supreme judge of the earth, cannot act in contradiction to himself. It may then be asked, on what plan the sentence annexed to the breach of the divine Law, can be prevented from being carried into effect.

This is a question which never could have been answered by man, had not God qualified him to do it, in the revelation of that divine plan of redemption, which constitutes, if we may so say, the beginning and the end, the Alpha and Omega of the Christian Dispensation; by which mystery of Godliness, the divine attributes of justice and mercy have been brought into

into a perfect state of reconciliation with each other.

The Apostle, therefore, having brought the subject to this critical point, by placing fallen man under the covenant of works, and thereby subjecting him to the condemnation of the Law as a sinner, takes care not to leave it there. But to preserve man from falling into utter despair, since on forfeiting the divine favour, he had no further claim to it, and had consequently the wages of sin only to expect, he proceeds to point out to him that stupendous instance of divine benignity, to which he might still look forward in hope. For, having observed to the Galatians, on the nature of the Law as a rule of universal obligation, that it was evident no man could be justified by it, he proceeds to point out that revealed plan of covenanted mercy, which provided for the exigency of the present case. With this view he refers to the message, which God ordered the Propet Habakuk to deliver, and write in such legible characters, that he who ran might *read* it: the purport of which message was, that the Jews to whom

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it was addressed, should believe and wait in patience for the accomplishment of the divine promises. "For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie; though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry. Behold his soul which is lifted up, is not upright in him: but *the just shall live by faith.*" Heb. ii. 3, 4. A passage which the Apostle renders more striking and intelligible, when, referring to it on another occasion, he follows the Septuagint translation. Speaking to the Hebrews, with the view of preventing them from casting away their confidence, he says, "ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry. Now *the just shall live by faith;* but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in them." Heb. x. 36.

The Apostle's argument to the Galatians is strictly logical; and may be reduced into the following syllogism.

If God hath declared that "the just shall

shall live by faith;" it is evident that no man can be justified by the Law, for "the Law is not of faith."

But God hath declared by the mouth of his Prophet Habakuk, even to the people who lived under the Law, that "*the just shall live by faith.*" Therefore, by the *Law* can no man be justified.

To keep the important object of that faith, by which, according to the Covenant of Grace in Christ, fallen man was to live, constantly before his eyes, was (as it has been already observed) the evident design of sacrifice. The institution of which in Paradise, coupled with the subsequent regulation of it under the Mosaic Ritual, by the express direction of the Deity himself, incontestably proves it to have been the intention of the Deity, that remission of sins should somehow be obtained by the shedding of blood. "It is the *blood* (said God to Moses) that maketh an atonement for the soul." Levit. xvii. 11.

The argument raised by the Apostle on this ground, with the view of bringing the Jews to the acknowledgement of a crucified Saviour, at the same time that it confirmed

firmed the foregoing general position, exposed the corruption to which it had led. "Almost all things (says the Apostle) are by the Law purged with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission. But in those sacrifices which were made under the Law, there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins." Heb. x. 3, 4.

Still the blood of bulls and of goats was the blood appointed by God under the Law for that purpose. But it was inconsistent with the wisdom of God to institute means, inadequate to the object in view. To do justice then to the divine plan in the œconomy of the Jewish Dispensation, here is an apparent difficulty which must be solved. And Scripture has taught us thus to solve it. When sacrifice was offered up with an eye of faith directed to that promised Messiah, whose atonement it was appointed to represent, it then answered the design of its institution, and was consequently an acceptable service: but when the Jewish people in their

their degenerate state having lost sight of the spiritual meaning of their Law, instead of looking to Christ as " the end of the Law for righteousness," rested in the letter of it, and considered the Law to be as it were the end of itself; they thereby became possessed of an idea, which could not in the reason of things be realized. After having, therefore, expressed the contempt in which the legal sacrifices, considered merely *in themselves*, and with reference to the abuse to which they had been ultimately made to minister, were held by the Deity, as " *vain oblations*;" the Apostle procceds to introduce the great Archetype, which all those sacrifices were designed to represent, and in whom alone they had their completion, " Wherefore, (says the Apostle) when the great High Priest of our salvation cometh into the world, he saith, sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me. In burnt offering and offering for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, " Lo! I came (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will." Heb. x. 5.

God

God by the mouth of his Prophet had plainly declared to the sacrificers under the Law, that the multitude of their sacrifices were to no purpose, for that "He delighted not in the blood of bullocks or of lambs, or of he-goats." Isaiah i. 11. It was at the same time the declared will of God under the Law, that *blood* should atone for sin. Lev. xvii. 11.—What was written therefore in the volume of the sacred Book relative to this important subject, was written not of the typical sacrifices under the Law, but of their great anti-type Christ. In correspondence with which idea, we are expressly told by the Apostle that "the *blood of Christ* cleanseth from all sin." 1 John i. 7.—The will of God then literally understood was this, that his only begotten Son, in his character of Redeemer of fallen man, should "by his one offering of himself, perfect for ever them that are sanctified." And therefore did God prepare him a body, that he might have blood to shed for the purpose.

Of this we can have no possible doubt if we admit the testimony of the Holy Ghost. "Whereof (continues the Apostle) even

even the Holy Ghost is a witness to us. For after that he had said, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my Laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them;" he then adds, by way of conclusion, " their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin." Heb. x. 14.

Jesus Christ then having " redeemed us from the curse of the Law, *himself being made a curse for us;*" having, as our Church strongly expresses herself, " by his one oblation of himself once offered made a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world;" the great stumbling block in the way of pardon has thereby been graciously removed. Thus the two positions in the text are brought to concenter in the character of Jesus Christ, as the appointed Redeemer of fallen man. The wages of sin having been discharged on his devoted person, the condemned criminal becomes an object for mercy. And eternal life, purchased by the obedience

ence of Christ, may now be conferred, as the gift of God, on sinners, without any impeachment of divine justice.

This is that mystery of Godliness, which angels desire to look into; but which, in its full extent, is unfathomable; for "the love of Christ passeth knowledge;"—"That mystery which had been hid from the beginning of the world, but is now made manifest to the saints;" Eph. iii. 9.—which has so compleatly counteracted the malice of Satan. By the fall, Adam forfeited his right of access to the tree of life, as an *innocent* creature. Satan triumphed in the idea that such right was never to be recovered. But in this he has been disappointed. Through divine grace, "a new and living way" to the tree of life, "through the vail of Christ's flesh," has been marked out to us. For, on reference to that part of Revelation, which relates to the concluding scene of Christ's mediatorial office, where the same symbolical language, in which the events in Paradise are described, is preserved; we find that a right to the tree of life, the symbol of immortality, is still to be obtained through Christ;

cent or fallen state, could make no conditions for himself. His obtaining it therefore, must under all circumstances depend on his conformity to the conditions vouchsafed to him by his Maker. What those conditions of Salvation were before the fall, we Christians are not concerned with. What they now are under the covenant of grace, it is the object of the Bible to inform us. By adopting that golden canon of criticism, prescribed in the twentieth Article of our Church; a canon necessary to the interpretation of writings of every kind; which directs us not so to expound one part of Scripture that it be repugnant to another, we feel ourselves warranted in determining the great doctrine of vicarious atonement for sin by the shedding of blood, to be the true doctrine of Scripture; because it is the only doctrine that makes the Bible a consistent book. This idea, therefore, must be expected to accompany Divine Revelation through all its parts. To be satisfied that it does, all that is necessary is, that its contents be duly examined.

The Patriarchs and faithful Jews preserved

served this important idea in its proper application to the blood of the promised Messiah. Of Him every prophet who arose in Israel bare witness. " Receive (says St. Peter) the salvation of your souls; of which salvation (through Christ) the Prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of *the grace* that should come." 1 Eph. i. 10. So tha every age of the world from the beginning, has had its evangelists.* Through the type, the faithful under each former dispensation looked forward to the Anti-type; rejoicing with Abraham to see the day of Christ. " They therefore (as the Apostle describes their condition) died in faith, not having received the promises;" but in consequence of their full persuasion on the subject, having actually embraced them." Heb. xi. 13. The sins of David were irremissible by the Law. He knew however that forgiveness was to be had in Heaven *through Him* to whom he looked up as

* Hence the learned Mede owns that the Gospel or glad tidings of Salvation through Christ, was as ancient as the time of man's sin, and afterwards repeated and continued. P. 110.

" his

" his Strength and his Redeemer."—On the ground of this faith therefore he confessed and humbled himself, prayed for and obtained absolution. " Against thee only have I sinned; deliver me from blood guiltiness, O God, thou God of my Salvation! and my tongue shall sing of thy righteousness." Psal. li.

The apostate Jews, who had compleatly deserted that standard of faith, which stamped a value on the religion of their forefathers, still preserved the same idea; but applied its efficacy to the stated observances of the ritual Law, to which alone they looked for *righteousness*. And the object the Apostles had in view was, to restore this doctrine of atonement to its *original* standard; by correcting the fatal errors which had been grafted on this important subject, and teaching men to look for Salvation only through faith in the blood of a crucified Redeemer.

Whilst even the Heathens, directed by that ray of light which Revelation had imparted to them, adopted the same prevailing idea, as the ground, on which their religious service, false as it was, was originally

ginally built. Those sublime mysteries which had been carried off with them, on their separation from the worshippers of the true God, though grossly corrupted by filthy prostitutions, served nevertheless to preserve some general notion relative to the object of their institution. From whence it appears, that each species of worshippers, however different their religious service, agreed in one point; that of looking *beyond themselves*, for what was to render them acceptable to the object of their respective worship.

It was reserved for professors under the Christian dispensation, to exchange this general idea of *vicarious atonement for sin*, to which Paganism no less than Divine Revelation, bears decided testimony, for that most fatal one of self-sufficiency and independence; an idea not more incompatible with the present state of fallen man, than it is revolting to that gracious plan, which has been set on foot for his recovery.

Those, who in former dispensations have been blessed with the advantage of Revelation, have been guided, or at least have professed

professed to be guided by it. Under the Christian Dispensation, we are constrained to see that extraordinary phenomenon of Revelation openly rejected: and men, calling themselves reasonable beings, setting themselves up to be their own oracles, and their own Saviours. This fatal delusion can be considered but as one of the last desperate efforts of the grand enemy of mankind, to counteract the gracious scheme of Redemption, by rendering them indisposed to receive it.

But such men, who affect to be wise above what is written, it may be proper to remind, that reason was given for the purpose of enabling them to form a proper judgement with respect to the evidence on which a Revelation stands; but not to be set up in opposition to the Revelation itself.

When employed in ascertaining the authenticity of a Revelation, it is employed in the execution of a task to which it was intended to be competent; that of guarding against notorious imposition: but when appealed to as an infallible standard of judgement, by which the contents of a Revelation

velation are to be determined, reason is then employed by them against the Divine Being from whom they have received it. Not that we would be understood as confining the province of reason in religion to the mere estimating the evidence of Revelation; because to a certain degree it must be employed in judging of its contents. But this we mean, that when reason has ascertained a Revelation to be divine, it is most unreasonable in man to reject or attempt to evade any doctrines, which by legitimate interpretation such Revelation is found to contain, on the ground that they cannot fully comprehend them.* If then the argument in favour of Christianity, which is to be drawn from the several parts of Scripture regularly and

* The generality of unbelievers, it may be suspected, possess strong propensities to err about divine things, and a secret indisposition to admit truths, which lay open the weakness and corruption of our fallen nature in such manner as to mortify their pride and humble their pretensions; by holding out to them a light of such a clear and piercing quality as never fails to discover to them those latent vices and evil inclinations, which man, unassisted by grace, is seldom, if ever brought to acknowledge.

fairly

fairly collated, be not in itself sufficient to produce conviction on their minds, we lament their want of discernment. But if they will not give themselves the trouble to bring the subject to this test, they are incompetent to form a judgement on its merits: and in such case they act not like reasonable men (unless they can be called reasonable men, who make no use of their reason;) but deceive themselves, by neglecting to place the most important of all subjects on that ground, on which, if fairly placed, it cannot fail to stand secure. Under such circumstances we must leave them to God; but not without earnestly beseeching them in the bowels of Christ, not to refuse him, "whose blood speaketh better things than the blood of Abel." "For if they escaped not, who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from Him that speaketh from Heaven." Heb. xii. 25.

To sound members of the Christian Church, (thanks be to God) such language does not apply. They know in whom they have believed. From the plain unequivocal language of the text, they have learnt

learnt to expect eternal life, on the only plan, on which it has been promised; "as the gift of God through Jesus Christ."—They consequently are prepared, we trust, by divine grace, to resist that fatal delusion, which exchanges the well-grounded hope of the Christian, for the presumptuous confidence of the self-righteous man; by placing a condemned sinner before the throne of grace, not in the becoming character of an humble suppliant, but in the offensive one of an arrogant claimant.

But, be it remembered, that in no page of the Bible do we read, blessed are the proud; blessed are the high-minded; blessed are the self-sufficient;—but on the contrary, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for their's is the kingdom of Heaven."—And whoever expects Christ for his Saviour, must first take the example of Christ for his pattern: he must learn of him to be "meek and lowly in heart," if he would find "rest unto his soul."

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The classical scholar has many proofs of this established opinion, relative to sacrifices among the Heathen, to produce from his favourite poets.—Homer in strict conformity to the Mosaic Ritual, points out the *first lings of lambs*, as particularly applied to this sacred use.

Αρνων πρωτογονων μεξειν ιερην Εκατομβην.

Il. δ. 120.

To this universal doctrine of atonement, Horace refers in his second Ode.

Cui dabit partes scelus expiandi
Jupiter?

The opinion relative to the steam or smoke of burnt sacrifices, being in a certain sense grateful to the Deity, as derived from a variety of texts of Scripture, was, though perverted, universally retained by the Heathens. —Homer (Iliad i. 493) makes Phœnix speak thus, with the intent of soothing the anger of Achilles.

Στρεπτοι δε τε κ᾽ Θεοι αυτοι,
Και μεν τους Θυεεσσι κ᾽ ευχωλης αγανησι,
Λοιβη τε, κνισση τε, παρατρωπωσ᾽ ανθρωποι,
Λισσομενοι, οτε κεν τις υπερβηη, κ᾽ αμαρτη.

————The Gods themselves are flexible;
And when sinful man, praying, makes requests,
Off'ring up odours, vows, libations, steam,
He then inclines them to forgive his sin.

See also Iliad. A. 315.—and Δ, 48.

Virgil, speaking of Paphos, the beloved city of Venus, says, (Æneid, lib. i. 420)

> ———Ubi Templum illi centumque Subæo
> Thure calent aræ, sertisque recentibus halant.
>
> There was her Temple, where with incense sweet
> And fragrant flow'rs an hundred altars fum'd.

And Ovid (Metam. lib. xii. 153) to mention no more, speaks of a sacrifice thus:

> Et Dis acceptus penetrarit in æthera nidor.
>
> The steam so grateful to the Gods above,
> Ascended up to Heaven.

By reading the Classics, as they ought to be read, with a Christian eye: Heathenism, being brought to bear its appropriate testimony to divine Revelation, may be made to answer a purpose contrary to its intention and nature, by confirming, what it was intended to confound; and thus the devil himself be compelled, to support the cause of truth. Whilst the Christian Disciple, by thus dedicating the first fruits of his education to the honour of the true God, furnishes the best security to the Church for the perfection of her future harvest; by his uniting in the same person, the Scholar and the Divine. For there is scarcely a doctrine of the Scriptures, which classical writers have not preserved, nor a miracle, which they have not imitated and transferred to themselves, in some form or other; in so much, that Celsus, one of the earliest writers against Christianity, most impudently pretended, that the Books of Moses were compiled

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dom, have apostatized from the sacred trust committed to them by their pious Founders. Standing on that broad ground of public estimation, which the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge most deservedly does; it may be worthy its consideration, whether any composition ought to be published under its name, which has not previously undergone its appointed revision. For, although the preachers themselves may by some be considered, as alone responsible for what they advance; still, it is presumed, that every one possessing a becoming respect for that honourable society, whose object it is to do the most essential good; will be hurt at the idea of its appearing to countenance, by the sanction of its *Imprimatur*, what will, by very many, be considered to be something worse than illiberal censure.

Due allowance will be made for the language of a popular discourse: and had Dr. Rennel confined his observations to the general depravity of the times; to the evils, neglects, and imperfections, which, in consequence of that depravity, must in a degree be found in all public seminaries, in proportion as they partake of the general corruption; for it is not in the nature of things, that the wisest and best conducted institution should, under such circumstances, produce all its intended effects; I say, had Dr. Rennel confined his eloquence to this popular topic, we should have thanked him for his exertion, as a zealous divine, interested, as he ought to be, for the honour of God and the welfare of his country. But the language made use of by Dr. Rennel on this subject, contains a charge of such gross mental pravity, against the parties apparently concerned in it; of such a wilful, systematic, and disgraceful prostitution of talents to the worst of purposes, as every Conductor

ductor of a public seminary, not lost to all sense of duty, must highly resent.

Dr. Vincent has resented it. He has moreover proved, what therefore remains unnecessary to be further insisted upon, that Dr. Rennel's attempt, by a gross, though doubtless, unintentional perversion of terms, to bring public seminaries into disrepute, by representing them as the nurseries of *Paganism*, was unworthy the discrimination of Dr. Rennel; whom no paroxysm of zeal, it is presumed, could so hurry on, as to leave him incapable of marking the broad line of distinction, between a *Pagan* education, and a *classical* one. On this head, however, Dr. Vincent has left no room for remark.

But Dr. Rennel appears desirous of withdrawing his charge, so far as the seminary over which Dr. Vincent presides, is concerned in it.—Dr. Rennel's long residence in Winchester, might have qualified him to have made a similar exception, in favour of the celebrated seminary in that place. And it is to be wished, that a name, which Dr. Rennel has introduced into his Sermon, whose well known manual of prayers is the *vade mecum* of Winchester scholars, had induced the Doctor to have made himself particularly acquainted, with the system of education adopted in a seminary, of which pious Bishop Kenn was once a distinguished ornament. Had this been the case, we flatter ourselves, it would have been found; that, making due allowance for the inconsideration of youth, and the tedium which, through the infirmity of human nature, will always more or less accompany a round of the same repeated exercises; there is no public seminary, in which an attention to religion, is more uniformly blended with the education of the school,

school, than in that of Winchester college. Dr. Rennel would have found, moreover, that the present Directors of that illustrious seminary, are not only to be classed among first rate scholars; but may also challenge a place on the same line with himself, as sound and zealous divines. Possessed of such a character, it is not in charity to be supposed, that they can be so shamefully regardless of a most important part of their duty; as, *in any degree* to justify the severity of Dr. Rennel's charge, they unquestionably ought to be.

The opinion of persons, respectable for their character and station, should at all times, be delivered with caution and reserve: particularly so, when it relates to characters of equal respectability with their own. This consideration does not appear to have had its full weight on the present occasion. For, had the nature of the charge in question, in all its bearings, been sufficiently attended to; it is to be presumed, that the framers of it might have concluded for themselves, that such a charge, unqualified as it is, would bear a much stronger mark of inconsideration, than either of judgement, of justice, or of charity. To tell the world at large, that those to whom the public education of youth is committed, and to whom this country chiefly looks, for the supply of that sound well-grounded knowledge, which, under God, is to counteract those loose theories and unsettled principles, which threaten the subversion of our Constitution, are, in the discharge of their important office, worse than Infidels; carries with it surely no mark of judgement. Whilst it is not less consistent with justice, to pronounce decidedly a sentence against parties unheard; than it is with charity, to circulate hastily an evil report.

No one can be more sensible than myself, of the extreme

treme importance of the attention, most necessary at this time to be paid, to the religious instruction of the rising generation. And Dr. Rennel ought to be given full credit, for his intention in marking this subject out for serious consideration. At the same time, when I consider the treatment which men of education should receive from each other; it is with regret I remark, that the charge brought forward on this occasion, appears to have proceeded from zeal, unaccompanied with that information necessary to entitle it to implicit credit. It will be concluded perhaps by many readers, that Dr. Rennel and the Bishop of Meath are prepared to substantiate and particularize the charge, on which they have committed themselves. If this be the case, let them, in God's name, proceed in their censorial office; the community at large will be bound to thank them for the honest discharge of it: and every religious Director of a public seminary, lamenting in common with Dr. Rennel and the Bishop, the present declining state of religion and morals in this country, will, we trust, be among the foremost to acknowledge his obligation for the introduction of any system, which, on mature consideration, shall be admitted to be a *real* improvement on that, in which he is at present engaged.

Did a general charge challenge any particular defence to be made against it, the Society, to which I have the honor to belong, would not want much abler advocates than myself for the undertaking. And when Dr. Rennell shall think fit to exchange an hasty and unqualified decision, for the more deliberate verdict of sober argument and candid enquiry, they will find little difficulty in proving, that the lamentable want of religious principle, which so strongly marks the character of the present

sent age, and which all good men must be equally solicitous to counteract; is not, we trust, to be attributed to a defect of system in our public seminaries, or to the wilful neglect of those whose duty it is to superintend them; so much as to the notorious prevalence of some other causes, over which they have no controul.

Still the charge in question, *indiscriminate* and *unqualified* as it is, being of a nature to do injury, without the probability of doing good; the Framers of it cannot but expect, to be made amenable to the private judgement of every individual, who feels interested for the credit of the society of which he is a member. For my own part, I should consider myself unworthy the advantages I may have received from a public education, as well as unjust to the sentiment I entertain of the excellency of the Wiccamical Institution; did I forego the present opportunity of entering my decided protest against a charge, so far at least as that Institution is concerned in it, notoriously false in itself; a charge which I conceive, has not been more *inconsiderately* made, than it has been *injudiciously* circulated.

DISCOURSE VIII.

HEB. XII. 1.

Wherefore, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight which doth so easily beset us; and let us run with patience the race that is set before us; looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our Faith.

NO discoveries can be made in Divine Revelation, until we are dispossessed of all those prejudices which are incompatible with it: that so we may be at liberty to examine spiritual subjects by that light, which the spirit of God has afforded for the purpose.

The different point of view in which the same subjects are seen by different persons, depends on the different qualities of the medium, through which they pass.

The

The mind of man acts like a mirror; which reflects images of objects placed before it, with a degree of truth in exact proportion to its own perfection. Should the surface of the metal be imperfectly polished, or should any unfortunate twist have taken place in the casting, the object reflected must necessarily assume a confused or distorted appearance, correspondent with the mirror's defect.

Thus it is with the human mind. Should its polish be *defective for* want of proper education; or should principles be laid up in it, which give an indirect turn to its exercise of reflection and judgement; the subject brought before it will bear testimony to the imperfection under which it labours; in such case, every conclusion upon it will wear the mark of confusion or obliquity, in proportion as the causes necessarily productive of such effects are found to prevail.

When Christianity was preached to the Jews, they could not understand it, because they wanted information relative to its essential object. Wedded to their law, and considering it to be of perpetual obli-

gation,

gation, they looked not beyond the letter of it. At the time of our Saviour's appearance in the flesh, the only advantages which they expected from their promised Messiah were of a *temporal* nature: whilst the privileges of the Church were regarded by them, in their character of the chosen people of God, as their *exclusive* patrimony. The Jews therefore stumbled at the very threshold of Christianity; a threshold which they will never pass over, till they have acquired correct information with respect to the nature of Christ's kingdom. Till this desired event takes place, the preaching Christ crucified must continue to be, what it now is, "to the Jews a stumbling block."

When Christianity was preached to the Gentiles, the heads of the wise men among them had received such an unfortunate direction from the pride of human science, as in a manner distorted (if we may so say) the simplicity of the Gospel into downright foolishness. Taken up with the parade of boasted system, and the ornaments of polished language, they were indisposed to relish truths, however import-

man reason in opposition to the authority of the revealed word.

Having failed in his first vigorous effort to *root* out Christianity by the violence of persecution; the enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat with the view of choking that word, which he had attempted in vain to extirpate. In the early days of Christianity, men began to be wise above what was written; fancying that the human mind was competent to bring forth a Revelation *of its own*, more perfect in *kind than* what was generally received.

When a false principle has once been adopted; till that principle is discarded, error will maintain its ground against the most demonstrative truth. The pride of human intellect is incompatible with a Religion founded in humility. Where then this false principle prevails, mysteries are rejected, because they are what divine wisdom intended they should be, *incomprehensible*; and which, if they were not, they would cease to be mysteries. And till this false principle is discarded, till men are disposed to receive the kingdom of God like little children, rather than

with

with arrogance to cavil and dispute about it, the incarnation of the Son of God for the Redemption of a lost world, instead of being, what it certainly is, the most comfortable, will be the most offensive doctrine; because it so directly militates against that spirit of pride and self-sufficiency, which are the characteristics of the natural man.

This spirit had its origin in heaven; and unhappily for man was brought down to earth by the first great Tempter: and is the mother and nurse of all the heresies, that have at different times disturbed the peace of the Church. The Jews had a saying, that there was a grain of the golden calf in all their subsequent judgements. And we may truly say, that there is a spice of the first sin, namely, *pride*, in all our sins and delusions. And would we search impartially, we should not fail to find it. This is what corrupts both our practice and our profession; and hinders us as much from working as from believing right.

To trace the effects of this fatal principle, under the Christian Dispensation, as they

they have been manifested in the various aberrations of vain and undisciplined minds from one heresy to another; would be *to* write the most humiliating history of human weakness and human folly. It would be to represent a great part of mankind, like the blind Heathen governor, engaged in inquiring after truth; at the same time that their eyes are shut to the brightness which Revelation throws around the subject: whilst they are eagerly embracing every thing but the truth, because an over-weening opinion of their own judgement, will not suffer them to receive it, through the channel that divine wisdom has appointed to convey it.

The testimony of Scripture is doubtless competent to the purpose for which it has been vouchsafed; otherwise we should not be referred to it for information on spiritual subjects. When therefore any fact or doctrine has been plainly declared in Scripture; all probable reasoning, metaphysical speculation, or conjectural criticism which tend to generate doubt on the subject, must give way to the conviction, that the writings, in which such fact or doctrine

doctrine is contained, were divinely inspired.

In proportion then as we depart from Scripture, as a Divine Revelation, we depart from the standard of infallibility. Whilst by an enquiry into the various opinions, which the pride of human reason and the fallibility of human judgement have built upon it; at the same time that we are exchanging a lesser authority for a greater, we are perplexing subjects, which it was the design of Scripture to reveal with a degree of plainness, suited only to the circumstances of man's present condition. In so doing, we shew ourselves ignorant of the design of Revelation, which was not so much to make us *knowing*, as *believing* Christians: a design to which nothing can be more obnoxious than that pride of reason, which is exercised in endless disputation; because it considers itself competent to the perfect solution of all spiritual subjects; and that it is a degradation of the human intellect to admit any thing to be true, which it is not able to demonstrate. A species of pride which cannot be better exposed than in the following strong language

guage of the book of wisdom. "What man is he that can know the counsel of God, or can think what the will of the Lord is; for the thoughts of mortal men are miserable, and our devices but uncertain. For the corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind, that museth on many things. Hardly do we guess aright at the things that are upon the earth; and with labour do we find the things that are before us; but the things that are in heaven who hath searched out? and thy counsel who hath known; except Thou give wisdom, and send thy holy spirit from above?" Wisd. of Sol. ix. 13.

Considering then, that the difficulties in which some spiritual subjects are involved, are not derived so much from the testimony of Scripture itself, as from the authority annexed to different interpretations of it, together with the criterion by which our judgement on them is determined; our object in view in the foregoing Discourses has been, so far as might be, to make the Scripture its own interpreter; by bringing together the evidence which different

ferent parts of it contribute to the confirmation of that essential doctrine of the cross, which it was intended to reveal.

When men uninfluenced by prejudice, and without pride to gratify, are seriously intent on finding out the truth for *the truth's sake*, they seldom meet with much difficulty in the attainment of their object. And if Scripture be admitted to speak for itself according to the plain letter and sense of it, there is little reason to doubt, but that this remark will be justified, by the experience of every *honest* reader of it. It was the observation of * one, who seems to have profited little by it himself; that "when we enquire into the doctrine of any book or set of books, concerning any subject; and particular passages are alledged in favour of different opinions; we should chiefly consider what is the *general tenor* of the whole work with respect to it; or what impression it would probably make upon an impartial reader."

On this plan we have endeavoured to

* *Dr. Priestley*; in his introduction to his History of early Opinions concerning Jesus Christ.

proceed,

proceed, in the foregoing elucidation of the fundamental doctrine of the Bible; considering it to be an incontrovertible position, that every Divine Revelation, so far at least as respects the great object of its promulgation, must speak an uniform and consistent language. With this idea in our mind, it has been our design to place the Bible in that point of view before the intelligent reader; that the Old and New Testament, considered as parts of a Revelation proceeding from the same Divine Author, being brought together for the mutual illustration of each other, might lead to this obvious and decided conclusion; that the prosecution of one favourite plan has directed the ways of Providence from the beginning to the end of time; and that the great scheme of redemption constitutes the chief burden of Revelation, from its first opening in Paradise, to the final testimony vouchsafed to the favourite apostle.

To ascertain this point, so necessary to the proper interpretation of the Sacred Writings, it was our object, to prove, that the redemption of fallen man through the

blood

blood of a crucified Saviour, (that promised seed of the woman,) constituted, if we may so express it, the thorough-bass of the general harmony of the Bible; on which the different Dispensations which have taken place, may be considered as so many variations, adapted to the circumstances of mankind at different periods. From tracing the analogy subsisting between these different Dispensations, by which they are demonstrated to be parts of one great whole, it was presumed, that conviction on this important subject must be derived, to every mind capable of appreciating the force of rational evidence. With this view it was observed, that the only seeming change which has taken place in the Divine councils relative to the redemption of fallen man, has respected not the plan itself; for that has been the same from the beginning; but the manner of communicating it to the world: and that this circumstance gave rise to the different Dispensations adapted by Divine Providence, to the condition of the parties for whom they were appointed.

But though the Dispensations of grace have

have differed, the spirit of Divine Worship intended to be preserved by each, was essentially the same. The same language which the blood of the sacrifice spake to *Abel*, to Noah, and to Abraham, under the Antideluvian, and the Patriarchal, it spake also to the *faithful* under the Jewish Dispensation: conveying to each this important idea, that the sin of man was to be taken away by the means only of *that vicarious atonement*, which had been appointed in the Divine Councils for that purpose.

To this generally prevailing idea relative to the effect of sacrifice, as a religious service, it was observed, that the annals of heathenism not less than the page of revelation bore testimony. All mankind being derived from those, to whom the institution of sacrifice was originally delivered; all nations of the world consequently in some form or other retained the observance of it, for the purpose of putting away sin. A circumstance, coupled with the consideration of there being no rational analogy between the sin of man and the blood of a slain animal, which led to the conclusion; that

sacrifice

sacrifice was the original institution of the Deity; for the purpose of conveying to fallen man, through the medium of typical representation, that knowledge of the Divine plan for his recovery, which was necessary for the direction and establishment of his faith; a knowledge, which though liable to be perverted, was not to be effectually obliterated.

In confirmation of this conclusion; following the course of Divine Revelation, it was observed, that the circumstantials of the Jewish Ritual, of which sacrifice constituted a prominent feature, derived their authority from the express appointment of the Deity; and that among the particulars of this emblematic institution, it was expressly declared by God, with the view of pointing out the intended efficacy of the sacrifical service to the Jewish people, that the blood of the victim was given upon the altar "to make an atonement for the soul." Lev. xvii. 11. Whilst for the purpose of directing the eye of the faithful to the true object of the sinner's hope, every sacrifice pointed out some property or accident, that was to befal that grand

Antitype, who was in the fulness of time to appear. At the same time to prove, that the blood of bulls and of goats, though shed under the law by the express direction of God, could not be blood possessing *in itself* any atoning efficacy; reference was had to that declining state of the Jewish nation, when the appointed sacrifice became offensive to the Divine Appointer of it; because the spirit which could alone give value to the service, had notoriously departed from it. "To what purpose (said God on this occasion) is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks or of lambs, or of he-goats. Bring no more *vain* oblations."—Isa. i. 11. Sacrifice in this case was rejected, on the same principle that the ritual service under every dispensation must be, when it no longer answers the purpose of its institution.

From this dark night of Jewish blindness, passing on to that bright day, when the Sun of Righteousness shone forth on the world; it was our object to draw out that

that decisive conclusion on this important subject, to which the general tenor of Divine Revelation was designed to lead.

With this view, the Redeemer himself was brought forward, in the act of drawing aside, as it were, the vail from the Mosaical Law, for the purpose of disclosing its *real object:* by making (in the language taken, though somewhat altered by the Apostle, from the Book of Psalms,) the following explicit declaration. "Sacrifice and offering for sin thou wouldest not, but a body hast Thou prepared me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin Thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, lo! I come, (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will O God." Heb. x. 5.

In the foregoing declaration, the inefficacy of the legal sacrifices to take away sin, and the divine disapprobation of them, considered in that light, are unequivocally pronounced. The Redeemer, referring to the predictions concerning himself in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, strongly expresses the pleasure he had in doing his Father's will; in other words, in accomplishing

plishing the Law. " I delight to do thy will, O my God, yea thy Law is within my heart." Psal. xl. 8. To which authoritative declaration the Apostle has subjoined the following plain paraphrase. " When He said, sacrifice and offering, and burnt offerings for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; (which are offered by the Law,) then said *He*, ' lo I come to do thy will O God.' He taketh away the first, that He may establish the second. By the which *will* we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Christ once for all." Heb. x. 8. Which was, in other words to say, that the sacrifices of the Law were taken away by Christ, with the intent that the sacrifice of his own body, the only effectual sacrifice for sin, being substituted in their stead, might thereby be established.

Did the Sacred Writings afford no other evidence on the subject before us; that which has been above produced might, it should seem, be sufficient to determine the judgement of every unprejudiced person. But St. Paul had strong prejudices to deal with. The chain of argument made

made use of therefore by him in his Epistle to the Hebrews, was particularly calculated to counteract them: the object of which was, by drawing a parallel between the Law and the Gospel, to convince his Hebrew brethren, that the religion of the Church of God was, for substance, the same under every Dispensation; that, (according to the language of our Homilies) "although the holy men of old were not named Christian men; yet was it a *Christian Faith* that they had; for they looked for all the benefits of God the Father, through the merits of his Son Jesus Christ," as we now do.

With this object in view, before the Apostle enters on his parellel, he reminds the Hebrews, that the same name by which the Religion of Christ was *then* distinguished, had before been applied to it under the legal dispensation; when alluding to those who composed the Church of God in the wilderness, he says; "unto us was the *Gospel* preached as well as *unto them.*" Heb. iv. 2.

By the term *Gospel*, it is well known, is meant, a message from God, conveying the tidings

tidings of Salvation to lost man. This Gospel, St. Paul tells us, was preached to Abraham; when the Scripture said "In thee shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Gal. iii. 8.

This Gospel, the same Apostle tells us, was preached to the Church in the wilderness. The remark subjoined by the Apostle relative to the unprofitableness of the Gospel, on account of its "not being mixed up with faith in them that heard it," furnishes no argument against the sufficiency of the Gospel *then*, any more than it does *now*. It proves only what, alas! we too well know, that in all ages of the world, there have been, and will be carnal minded men; destitute of that principle, distinguished in Scripture by the term, *Faith*; which, what change soever may take place in human opinions, is "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."

Considering therefore the object the Apostle expressly had in view, our principal and conclusive appeal was made to his Writings; as calculated to qualify the Christian disciple to read the *Gospel in the Law*, and the *Law in the Gospel;* and by thus

thus bringing together, and fitting to each other these two different parts of Divine Revelation, enable him to proceed with confidence to that decided conclusion, in which it was presumed, such concentrated evidence, if duly appreciated, could not fail to terminate.

On the authority of this Apostle then, whose express object it was to draw his Jewish brethren into the Christian Church, by explaining to them that relative connection between the Jewish and Christian Dispensation, which was calculated to remove every stumbling block out of their way, we proceeded to observe; that the whole œconomy of grace in the Redemption of mankind, had received its perfect completion in the character and office of Jesus Christ; "who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification and Redemption." 1 Cor. i. 30.

It had been recorded in the sacred pages, that man, as a sinful creature, was fallen under condemnation. It had at the same time been graciously revealed, that through the seed of the woman, a recovery to the lost favour of his Maker, was some-

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how to be effected. It was afterwards more distinctly revealed, that by divine appointment "*blood* was given for the atonement *of the* human soul." But the blood of bulls and of goats was expressly declared, on the same divine authority, to be ineffectual to this purpose. A declaration which obviously leads to that conclusion, which the whole tenor of the New Testament is calculated to confirm; namely, that the *Blood of Christ* on the Cross, was that *very blood* of the Lamb, *slain from the foundation of the world*, for the sins of mankind.

It having been moreover expressly said in Holy Writ, that "no man can redeem his brother," it follows from thence, that should Jesus Christ be regarded only in the character of *mere man;* his blood must have been equally ineffectual for the purpose of Redemption, with that of bulls and of goats. For in such case, Jesus Christ having "been made of the seed of David according to the flesh" Rom. i. 3. and "under the law," Gal. iv. 4. was himself a debtor to divine justice; and consequently incapable of becoming a Mediator

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for his brethren. A consideration, which necessarily terminates in the admission of that decided testimony which Scripture bears to the divinity of his Person, in the following short but emphatic sentence; that "*God was in Christ*, reconciling the world unto himself." 2 Cor. v. 19. And that the method of reconciliation adopted, was calculated to demonstrate the righteousness of God on the occasion; that He might appear to be *just* whilst he justifies the believer in Christ Jesus: according to that remarkable passage in the third chapter of Romans, full to this purpose.— "For all have sinned, says the Apostle, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace, through the Redemption that is in Jesus Christ, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood; to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God: to declare, I say, at this time, his righteousness: that He might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus."

The forbearance of God in the remission of sins that are past, is here opposed to

to his righteousness, declared to the world in the method of forgiveness, " through the Redemption that is in Christ." This is the point to which the force of the Apostle's argument on this occasion is directed; and for the establishment of which, the repetition here made use of is evidently designed: " to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness, says the Apostle, that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus."—" Because, or on account of the passing by of sins committed aforetime, (as the original, διε την παρεσιν των προγεγονοτων αμαρτηματων" may be most literally rendered,) God, by setting forth Jesus Christ to be a propitiation, hath thereby given the most clear demonstration of his justice; in that, whilst death, according to the Law, was " the wages of sin," eternal life, as " the gift of God," might still *in justice* be conferred on the sinner, through the atonement of his incarnate Son.

Such is the conclusion, to which the foregoing Discourses were designed to lead the intelligent and unprejudiced reader. A conclusion, which, it is presumed, will not be

be controverted, so long as the rules of legitimate criticism prevail, and the plain language of Scripture be admitted to convey a plain idea.

Having brought the subject to this determined point; we proceed with the Apostle to strengthen our argument, (if any strength is necessary to be added to it,) by examples. "Wherefore, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses; let us lay aside every weight and the sin which does so easily beset us; and let us run with patience the race that is set before us; looking unto Jesus, the *Author* and *Finisher of our Faith.*" Heb. xii. 1.

The Apostle, in the chapter immediately preceding that from whence the text is taken, had been giving a list of the Worthies, who, in the different ages of the Church, had borne testimony to the true faith, from the days of Abel to those of the prophets. Having so done, he brings them forward as it were, in the opening of this chapter, as a multitude assembled at the goal, at which they themselves had arrived; for the purpose of beholding with earnest anxiety, in what manner

manner Christians, having the same object before their eyes that they had, ran their course. Jesus Christ then, the Author and Fnisher of our Faith, as he is here emphatically called, was the *object* to which those Worthies looked; who were recorded by St. Paul as having " obtained a good roport;" otherwise it could not have served the purpose either of example or encouragement, for *them* to have been pointed out to Christians, as witnesses of their exertion on such an occasion. The words of the Apostle therefore, whilst they add strength to his general argument on the subject of faith, by an appeal to the cloud of witnesses who had borne testimony to it; furnish at the same time the strongest encouragement to Christians, eagerly to persevere in their Christian race, and resolutely to lay aside every weight that may impede their progress; seeing that so many, who like themselves had once the field before them, were now happily arrived at the end of their course.

Had St. Paul lived in these days, though his cloud of witnesses would have been abundantly increased, by that great Army of

of Martyrs who have, since his time, borne testimony to the Christian faith; yet his argument could not have received additional strength. Nor could any direction, which he might now give, be more pertinent, than what he heretofore gave to those Hebrews, to whom his Epistle was addressed: when, reminding them of those who had spoken unto them the word of God, he directs them, "to follow their faith, considering the end of their conversation; "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." Heb. xiii. 7, 8.

That the doctrine of vicarious atonement in the divine person of a crucified Saviour, has been the doctrine of Salvation through every dispensation of grace I am fully convinced; because the different parts of Revelation concur in bearing testimony to it. It is moreover attested by the writings of the Fathers; and displayed by the uniform and generally unvarying faith of the Church of Christ from the days of the Apostles to the present time. All these rays of light, in my opinion, unite to form such a luminous degree of evidence in favour of the doctrine, as nothing,

it should seem, but a judicial blindness, can be capable of rejecting.

In the elucidation however of this important subject, it was our professed design to confine ourselves to that testimony which the Scripture bears to itself: not because all testimony drawn from subsequent authority is considered to be unimportant; but because it was incompatible with our object; which was to speak to the understanding of plain but intelligent readers of the Bible; and consequently not to enter upon ground, on which such readers might be unable to follow us. We have been led to think, that this mode of establishing the doctrine of Christianity by the plain letter of Scripture, and the general tenor of Revelation; to the advantage of bringing the subject within the narrowest compass, added that of leaving the strongest impression on the Christian mind. A powerful motive for thus simplifying the subject was, that we thereby steered clear of those fruitless cavils and disputes, which have from time to time been raised against the authority of the early Fathers of the Church: chiefly by the disingenuity of those

those, who felt a disposition to rebel against the strong evidence which their writings contain, from a conviction that that evidence, if fairly taken and fully received, made decidedly against themselves. With persons acting under the direction of such a principle, we are well persuaded, that neither the argument we have produced, though built, as we trust it is, on the ground of legitimate reasoning; nor the examples by which it is supported, though drawn from Scripture, will have much weight: because they can neither enter fairly into the one, nor is it possible, under their present circumstances, that they can possess much respect for the other. Habituated, either through prejudice of education, a supercilious turn of mind, or an overweening conceit of the powers of human reason, to a general contempt of the Sacred Records; such self-sufficient persons sit down to the Bible, (if they ever sit down to it at all,) with a disposition unqualified to derive information from it.

To persons thus full of themselves, if, in the true spirit of Christian charity, we might presume to recommend an example,

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it should be that of the famous apologist and sound believer Justin Martyr; the sincerity of whose conversion to the Christian faith was fully proved, by that unqualified and open avowal which proved the prelude to his death.

J. Martyr had been educated in the schools of the Grecian sages. It was to be expected therefore that he shonld possess early prejudices for the opinions of the Heathen philosophers. These prejudices however did not prevent him, from examining fairly the evidences of the Christian Religion. And the result of that examination was a firm conviction, that Christianity contained the best and truest philosophy. This conviction enabled him to weigh the merits of the great Founder of the Academy in a proper scale; and his declaration on the subject was this. That " as Aristotle and Plato differed so much in explaining the nature of earthly things, they are not worthy of credit when they discourse concerning the invisible world. If any one should accurately inspect the opinions of Plato, his opinions will be found to be repugnant to each other: on which

which account he cannot escape the censure of deliberate falsehood."—" Therefore (says Justin in another place) since nothing true can be derived from *such* teachers concerning the real nature of God; it remains that we listen to the inspired prophets, who lived long before the philosophers of Greece, and taught nothing from their own imagination, but received consistent and harmonious instructions from on high. For it is impossible that their predictions should be the result of human ingenuity; or be imparted merely by the light of nature. In sublime subjects, the philosophers have no accurate knowlege. Whatever is well expressed in all respects, belongs to the disciples of Christ."

Persuaded we are, that would the reasoners of the present day, who affect to be wise above what has been written, sit down to the study of the Scriptures with the same honest disposition of mind, that characterized the above-mentioned Apologist; the result of their investigation would correspond with that of his: and, though they came to the Bible *blind*; they would,

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through divine grace, go away from it *seeing*; and glorifying that God, who, by *speaking the word*, had healed them of their infirmity. In fact, " if God had not vouchsafed to teach mankind what they ought to know and do, both before and since the fall, we must have been in perfect ignorance of God, and all Religion, from the beginning of the world, until now."

But, when it is considered, that true science has always been the companion of true Christianity; and that reason, when in its highest state of advancement, instead of being the enemy of Revelation, is in truth its firmest friend; Revelation never appearing to greater advantage, than when viewed by the strongest light which Reason can impart; we can feel no objection to meet these reasoners, (if they are disposed to reason consistently) on what they conceive to be their own peculiar ground. With this idea, admitting the Bible to be a standard of authority, we would propose for their solution the following plain questions.

On their assumed position, that repentance

ance and amendment of life, are in themselves sufficient to restore the sinner to the lost favour of an offended Deity, and consequently that no benefit is derived to him from the death of Jesus Christ; it may be asked, how they will reconcile it to the character of that Being, with whom "is neither variableness nor shadow of turning;" that the idea of *vicarious atonement for sin*, that idea which express Revelation rendered essential to religious service under the Antediluvian, Patriarchal and Jewish Dispensations, should under the Christian be totally discarded. It might be fairly required of them to prove, what change had taken place in the circumstances of the sinner, since the coming of Christ, to render a plan of reconciliation, which had been sanctioned by divine appointment, no longer necessary.

It may be further asked, on the ground laid down by the Apostle, that Scripture was given for doctrine and instruction in righteousness; on what principle it is to be accounted for, that the general tenor of Scripture is calculated to lead into error, on a subject of the greatest importance to those,

those, for whose use it was designed. And such, it will be admitted, must be the case, if the doctrine of *vicarious atonement for sin*, does not constitute an essential doctrine of Salvation.

The Gospel contained in the New Testament, was not so much addressed to the wise, the mighty, and the noble, for they were not in a condition to receive it; as to the ignorant, the lowly, and the meek, for "their's is the Kingdom of Heaven." The language of it, therefore, though sometimes highly figurative and even hyperbolical, when it immediately respects that mysterious plan, which surpasses the utmost stretch of the human intellect; yet, in drawing the great and broad lines of faith and practice, for the edification of common Christians, to whom the Gospel was originally addressed; it is for the most part plain, and not easy to be mistaken. In looking into this part of Divine Revelation, then, we find Jesus Christ marked by the distinctive appellation of "*the Lamb of God*, slain from the foundation of the world."

It may be asked then, *in what sense* this appellation

appellation is to be taken.—Now there are but two senses that we know of, namely, literal and figurative, in which any language is to be understood. The *literal* sense speaks plainly for itself. And that a correct idea may be conveyed by the *figurative* sense; a certain analogy must subsist between the subject under consideration, and the figure to which reference is made. The distinctive title of "*Lamb of God,*" taken in a *literal* sense, conveys no idea to the Christian reader. Taken in a *figurative* sense, it necessarily carries with it the idea of *a sacrifice for sin.*

If then, in conformity with the opinion of those, who do not admit Jesus Christ to have been made a sacrifice for sin, this title of "*Lamb of God*" is not to be understood in a *figurative* sense, as allusive to the Pascal Lamb under the Law; it may be asked, why such an appellation was ever applied to Christ, which tends to confound two Dispensations, which on this ground have no connection with each other.

In such case the title in question either conveys no idea at all, or a false one. And the conclusion from the premisses must be

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most blasphemous: namely; that the Holy Ghost, whose office in the divine œconomy was to lead the Apostles into all truth, was unqualified for his undertaking: he either did not make use of language sufficiently correct to convey the proper idea; or purposely made use of that, which was most calculated to lead into error.

For with what propriety the title of "*Lamb of God,*" can be applied to a prophet and teacher of righteousness, *simply considered;* it remains for them to determine, who profess to regard our Redeemer in no other character. It being undeniably certain, that had *teaching* been the *sole* object of our Saviour's coming; *a mere man,* enlightened from above, might have performed the whole business. On this supposition, admitting the language of inspiration to be correct, a title, which in such case must carry with it an idea totally foreign to our Saviour's character, could never have been applied to Him.

These are a few of the many questions that might be asked on this occasion. But as it is not our object so much to pursue error,

error, as to establish what we understand to be the truth, on the broad basis of Scripture; it will not be expected, that we should push our enquiries further.

Our attention is directed chiefly to those, who receive the Bible as a Divine Revelation; and profess to be guided by the contents of it, as they are understood by our excellent Church. Our professed object has been, to put them into that way of reading this sacred Book, considered as containing the title deeds of our heavenly inheritance, that may most conduce to the right settlement of their faith, and the consequent establishment of their practice.

By following the course of divine Providence through the different Dispensations of grace, and marking that harmonious connection by which the whole œconomy of Redemption is, as it were, indissolubly held together; they will be prepared for the full accomplishment of the mysterious plan, in the person and office of an incarnate God; and their faith, thus built on the *Rock of Ages*, will have nothing to fear from the attacks, that either

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open infidelity, or imposing sophistry may ever attempt to make against it.

If the systematic establishment of the Christian faith on the firm basis of divine Revelation, was *ever* necessary, it is *peculiarly* so in the present day; which bears witness to the most open and desperate attack that has ever been made on the Christian Religion, since the time that it was first published to the world. And never surely were the clergy more imperiously called upon to bear their most decided testimony to the doctrines of the Cross, than under the present awful circumstances of the world. Having marked the progress and direful consequences of that overflowing ungodliness now so much to be dreaded; in manners corrupted, morals depraved, dissipation predominant, above all, in Religion publicly discarded, and infidelity as publicly avowed; we must be convinced, if we are to be convinced of any thing, that Christianity has the promise of the life that *now* is, not less than of that which is to come: and consequently that whoever endeavours to banish it from society, whilst he is a rebel to his God,

God, proves himself, at the same time, to be the worst enemy to man.

But it is not from the attacks of open and declared infidelity that the member of the Christian Church has most to fear; but from that slow and gradual process, which the secret enemies of Christianity are constantly employing, for the purpose of sapping and undermining those fixed principles, which at all times characterize the true Christian professor. "It is marvellous to behold in what manner every department of literature has been occupied, and converted into a battery against the faith and the Church. Half our danger does not arise from tracts professedly penned on the subject of Religion, but from writings of other kinds, carrying nothing hostile in their appearance. The unsuspecting reader, who sat down to inform or amuse himself with a piece of natural or civil history, biography, a poem, a tale, or a fable; if he have not his wits about him, finds his reverence for the doctrines of Christianity, and those who teach them, filched from him; rises, to his great surprize, half an infidel, and is not sure whether

whether he has a soul, a Saviour, or a God."—Bishop Horne.

By such kind of reading, we find the authority of the Bible gradually losing its hold on the mind: in consequence of which, instead of employing means, which through divine grace would bring our faith back to its proper standard, we are more disposed to compromise the subject with the enemies of Christianity; by persuading ourselves, that the plan of it is of a still more comprehensive nature, than the Scripture has revealed it to be.

Having once adopted this *generalizing* (erroneously called *liberal*) system, which, by effacing all distinctions of sects and doctrines, tends to produce a general indifference for all religious opinions; we are no longer prepared to give a reason for the faith that is in us. In this unsettled condition we must not be surprized, if the event should be, what it too often is, that we are either led captive at will by the specious pretences of ignorance and enthusiasm; or make entire shipwreck of our faith, for want of having laid in proper ballast, to keep our vessel steady in its course.

Against

Against such dangerous deceptions it is our duty to guard the members of the Christian Church; by reminding them, that as the articles of the Christian faith are not subjects for human speculation, but derive their authority from the divine word; it cannot be a matter of indifference, whether they are received or not. Salvation, as the gift of God to man through Christ, if accepted at all, must be accepted on the terms, on which it has been graciously offered.

By keeping steadily before him then, that mass of evidence which the Sacred Writings furnish in support of the essential doctrines of the Cross, every honest reader of his Bible has it in his power, through grace, to become wise unto Salvation.

Under such circumstances, with a mind in unison with the sublime subject before him, he will be enabled, through the assistance of God's spirit, to go on from strength to strength in the path of holiness; till at length "he arrives at the fulness of stature in Jesus Christ."—In this state, "he will endure hardness as a soldier of Christ, fighting manfully the good fight of faith."

faith."—Then, "when the keepers of the house shall tremble; when the silver cord is about to be loosed; and the wheel of life on the point of being broken at the cistern;" Eccles. xii. 3. 6, having "ran with patience the race that has been set before him," he may with humble confidence "look up unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith;"—adopting this cheerful language of St. Paul; "I am now ready to be offered up; and the time of my departure is at hand. I have *fought* a good fight, I have *finished* my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." 2 Tim. iv. 6.

The subject we have handled, to those possessing an habit of close attention, may appear to have been made sufficiently clear, to render farther enlargement unnecessary; whilst to those who read cursorily it may be an advantage, for the purpose of establishing in their minds that decided conclusion, to which our connected chain

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of reasoning is meant to lead, to have the chief substance of it brought together in one point of view, under a short recapitulatory form. This consideration will, it is presumed, apologize to the intelligent reader, for a repetition of what has in a great measure been already said.

Our design in entering on the foregoing Discourses, however we may have failed in the execution of it, was, it must have been perceived, to establish the faith of the Christian Professor on the broadest basis: by pointing out to him that corresponding evidence, by which the several parts of divine Revelation bear testimony to the great plan of Redemption in the character and office of Jesus Christ: from a conviction, that Christian practice will always thrive, in proportion as Christian doctrine (that precious jewel of God's sanctuary, *the Church*) is generally understood and firmly embraced. For true faith elevates the mind, and by bringing our affections nearer to God, disposes us to do his will with more love and cheerfulness, and consequently to do more of it, and to better effect; which

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is a matter of infinite importance, and now too little attended to.

The foundation on which, for the completion of the intended purpose, our argument has been built, was this. That, as all parts of divine Revelation proceed from God, they must all be equally true. Secondly; that as God is a Being of infinite wisdom as well as power, who "seeth the end from the beginning," and with whom is "neither variableness nor shadow of turning;" every plan which boasts Him for its Author, must be characterized by a certain uniform consistency of design. This being an established principle, that the God of truth and wisdom can neither contradict himself, nor change his settled purpose.

In conformity with this principle, if the same spirit, which spake by Moses and the Prophets, did also speak by the Evangelists and Apostles, their writings must all stand on the same ground of authority.

When then the writers of the New Testament refer to, or argue from passages in the Old; the consistent conclusion will be,

be, that their references are just, their arguments proper, and the consequences drawn from them rational and conclusive. And should we find ourselves pressed with occasional difficulties in explaining the Scriptures after this plan, we should have a satisfaction in adopting the language heretofore made use of by Justin Martyr*, in reference to such a circumstance. "If (says he) any text of Scripture be urged as repugnant to any other text; I shall rather confess myself ignorant of its meaning, than once presume to imagine any real contrariety between them; and in full persuasion of the perfect agreement of Scripture with itself throughout, shall set myself to convince them who suspect God's word of inconsistency, that they ought to have the same reverent opinion of it with me, in regard to those matters."

The mysterious plan of Redemption then, in which the wisdom of the divine councils was engaged before the world began, being on all hands admitted to constitute the chief burden of Revelation;

* Justin M. Dial. cum Tryph. p. 289.

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on this great subject it is to be expected, that Revelation should be consistent with itself. Consequently, the language of the Old and New Testament on this subject must be so understood, as to convey to the mind of the Christian reader one uniform and correspondent meaning.

Such has been the foundation, on which we have built; which by all who acknowledge the general inspiration of the Scriptures, must be admitted to be a foundation not to be shaken.

On *this solid* foundation our superstructure has been raised; composed of those scattered materials furnished by different parts of Scripture, so brought together and fitted to each other, as to render the building of Christianity, in our judgement, both firm, uniform, and compact.

To drop our figure; with the view of leading the Christian to the intended conclusion, we considered the Bible, as a book that must be compared with itself by all who would draw from it its proper meaning. But that such comparison may be made with effect, it is necessary that the language, in which the Bible has for the most

most part been written should be understood. The Jews are a standing proof, to what a degree the matter of the Old Testament may be grossly misapprehended and falsely interpreted. To prevent the continuance of such gross misapprehension and false interpretation, which would have rendered the Christian Dispensation equally ineffectual with the Jewish, our blessed Saviour, immediately before his departure from the world, "opened the understandings of his disciples, that they might understand the Scriptures." And the opening of their understandings, we find, consisted in pointing out and explaining to them "the things which were written in the Law, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning himself." Luke xxiv. 44.

The language of the Scriptures being intended to bring man acquainted with Scriptural things, of which he can have no idea but what is received from Revelation; it must teach him in a manner, in which alone, in his present state, he is capable of being taught; namely, through

the medium of such things as he already comprehends.

Hence it is that the language of the Old Testament is, in a great degree, a language of type and figure; to be understood only in proportion as the correspondence between the sign and the thing signified can be justly ascertained. Upon the same principle, the Law was the adumbration of the Gospel; its instituted ordinances having their substance in the doctrines and mysteries of Christianity; in the words of the Apostle, "whose body is Christ."

This groundwork of our plan, having, it is presumed, been sufficiently established, we proceeded to place upon it the important doctrine of *vicarious atonement for sin* by sacrifice; considered as that essential doctrine, or grand hinge on which the great scheme of Redemption turns; and to which every part of divine Revelation, from that delivered to Adam in Paradise to the winding up of the awful scene of mysterious love, in the communications of the spirit to St. John, bears its appropriate meaning.

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The general idea annexed to sacrifice from its original institution, has been, that it was the appointed atonement for sin. All the Heathen superstitions, which were but so many different corruptions of this original institution, proceeded on this established idea. Their sacrifices being called their αντιψυχα, or ransom for their souls; and to the shedding of their blood they imputed pardon, and reconciliation with their offended deities.

When the Levitical Law was instituted, this idea, uniformly annexed to sacrifice, received the most formal and decided confirmation of the true God. "The life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it unto you upon the altar, to make an atonement for your souls: for *it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.* Therefore I said unto the children of Israel, no soul of you shall eat blood." Levit. xvii. 11, 12.

On this acknowledged principle, that blood made atonement for the soul, the whole Levitical service proceeded. The design of that service being to remind the parties concerned, that the life of the beast

beast slain on the altar, was accepted in exchange for the life of the offender; which, according to the original covenant between God and man, had been forfeited by sin.

On sacrifice, then, considered as the appointed atonement for sin, by the substitution of one life for another, there seems to have been but one opinion since the world began. The difference of opinion now subsisting on this subject, between the unbelieving Jew and the Christian, respects *the quality of the blood* appointed to be shed for this purpose. The Jew, looking for a Messiah yet to come, considers, that in his days there shall be no further occasion for bloody and propitiatory sacrifices; and consequently that then all sacrifice shall cease, except that of praise and thanksgiving*. The Christian, knowing the Messiah to be already come, considers that the bloody and propitiatory sacrifices of the law have ceased, because the *blood of the Messiah*, which that poured out on the altar was designed to pre-figure, has been actually shed.

* See Raym. Mart. Pug. fid. part iii. dist. iii. c. 12.

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To establish this essential point, appeal was made to the Revelation in the New Testament; which, on the supposition of its proceeding from the same divine fountain of wisdom, puts this subject beyond the reach of rational controversy. For in that Revelation we are told, on the authority of Christ himself, that *his blood* was the blood appointed to be shed for the remission of sins. Matt. xxvi. 28.

In conformity with which sovereign idea is the decided language of the Apostle, where he says; that "Christ appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself;" Heb. ix. 26.—that he "bare our sins in his own body on the tree;" 1 Pet. ii. 24.—that "He was made sin and a curse for us." 2 Cor. v. 21.—Gal. iii. 13.—that "his soul was made an offering for sin, and that we have Redemption through his blood;" Isai. liii. 10. Col. i. 14.—that, being an High Priest, he must of necessity have something to offer; but, that it being impossible in the nature and reason of things, that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sin, God prepared Christ a Body; that in that Body he might have

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the *blood* necessary to fulfil the divine will on this occasion; " that the redeemed, through the vail of his flesh, might have boldness to enter into the holiest by *the blood of Jesus.*" Heb. x. 19.

The foregoing sacrifical modes of expression, addressed to men in the practice of worshipping God by sacrifices, must, on their own principles, be understood to imply, that the life of Christ, thus declared to be offered up, was, in conformity with the general idea annexed to sacrifice, a *proper* sacrifical substitution of his life for that of the sinful party: otherwise, there being no analogy between the two cases, the language of the New Testament on this subject, has no appropriate meaning; and St. Paul must plead guilty to the charge, that infidelity has brought against him, of being an *inconclusive reasoner.*

But from the premisses which have been laid down, and from which we have argued on this subject, namely, that one part of Divine Revelation cannot contradict another, the conclusion is incontrovertible.

Whilst the Jew then, who with the vail before his eyes acknowledges the Old Testament

tament *only* to be the Word of God, thereby rejects the council of God against himself, the unbeliever, under the Christian Dispensation, does more; for on the admission that the New Testament contains also a Divine Revelation, he makes God a liar, by denying the record which God has therein given of his Son: which record, in the plain language of the Baptist runs thus; that "*Jesus was the Lamb of God*, which taketh away the sin of the world." John i. 29.

The other part of this great subject, inseparably connected with the doctrine of vicarious atonement for sin by the shedding of blood, respects the character of the person whose blood was shed for the purpose. It is supposed by some, that provided men live honest and sober lives, they may be allowed to think and act freely, as to those points, which concern the manner in which they worship God, or the notions they may form about him. But Scripture sets before us another view of things, by teaching us, that to believe what has been revealed relative to the divine nature, attributes, and personality; and to shew our dependence

dependence on the means and method of Salvation, by acknowledging Jesus Christ in the character in which he appeared in the world, and paying him such services as he has prescribed, constitutes the essence of all true Religion, and the only sure foundation for all moral duty.

To establish, therefore, the most essential article of our faith, relative to the divinity of Christ, as necessary to the accomplishment of the work he undertook for man, and the consequent establishment of Christian practice, the same process of comparative evidence, by which the different parts of divine Revelation conspire to the elucidation of its general subject, was adopted.

From the Old Testament, it was observed, speaking of the children of men, that "none of them can by any means redeem his brother, or give to God a *ransom* for him.", Psal. xlix. 7. Whilst the language of the New Testament was brought forward to inform us, on the authority of Christ himself, that "the Son of Man came to give his life a *ransom for many*." The argument drawn from these premisses,

premisses, and considered to be decisive, was briefly this. If no man, according to the language of the Old Testament, can redeem his brother; and if, according to the language of the *New*, "the Son of Man came to give his life a ransom for many*;" it necessarily follows that *this Son of Man* must be something *more than man*; otherwise he was incompetent to the work he came to perform.—At the same time, we are expressly told by an inspired Apostle, that Jesus "verily took not on him the nature of angels," Heb. ii. 16.—If Jesus Christ then was something more than *man*, and yet not *an angel;* in what character, it may be asked, did He appear in the world? The Scriptures have fully answered this important question, by informing us, that "the seed of the woman" promised in Paradise "to bruise the Serpent's head," was, in the plain unequivocal language of the Gospel, "*God manifest in the flesh*, that He might destroy the works of the devil†." That for this purpose, "all the fulness of the Godhead dwelt in Him

* Matt. xx. 28.

† 1 Tim. iii. 16—1 John iii. 8.

bodily;"

bodily;" Col. ii. 9.—that "with *his own blood* he might purchase the Church of God;" Acts xx. 28.—"Having *by his own blood* obtained eternal redemption for us." Heb. ix. 12. Thus, in allusion to the redemption from Egypt, Jesus Christ is called by the Apostle, "*Our Passover;*" whilst the blood, shed by him for that purpose, on account of the mysterious connection subsisting in his Divine Person, is called the *blood of God.*

Hence, our Saviour, speaking of his body, called it a temple, John ii. 19. because it was the residence of his Godhead; in allusion to the Temple at Jerusalem, which was considered to be the dwelling-place of the Deity on Earth. "I have built, said Solomon, when he had finished the Temple, a place for thy dwelling for ever." 2 Chron. vi. 2. And hence the Evangelist St. John, in his description of the incarnation of the WORD, refers to the tabernacle under the Law, which was erected in the wilderness for the same purpose that the temple was afterwards built in Jerusalem; and was in like manner a type of our Saviour's body. "Let them make

make me (said Jehovah to Moses, Exod. xxv. 8.) a sanctuary that I may dwell (or *tabernacle*) among them." "The WORD (says St. John) who was in the beginning with God, and was God, was made flesh, * and dwelt

* The Greek word εσκηνωσεν, i. e. *tabernacled,* here translated *dwelt,* is derived from the Hebrew word שכן which imports to *dwell* or *inhabit:* and which with the single Hebrew letter *mem* prefixed, is used to denote the tabernacle erected by Moses. Hence, commentators have collected, and are generally agreed, that St. John in the word made use of on this occasion, meant to allude to the residence of the Second Person in the Mosaic tabernacle, as the earnest of his future dwelling among men in a human body, his tabernacle of flesh. That such was the light in which this interesting subject, as bearing decided testimony to our Saviour's Divinity, was seen by the Primitive Church, the writings of Eusebius furnish the most convincing proof; who in his Demon. Evangel. has thus paraphrased the fifth verse of the cxxxiid Psalm. "Until he find out a place for the Lord, and a *tabernacle* for the God of Jacob:—i. e. till he should learn from the Lord himself, where Christ should be born. He is therefore heard, and the oracle returns for answer, that Bethlehem was appointed for that place of the Lord, and the tabernacle of the God of Jacob. The holy spirit having proclaimed this by himself, makes answer to himself: Behold we heard of it at Ephratha—Now *Ephratha* is the same as *Bethlehem;* as appears from Genesis, where it is said of Rachael;

And

dwelt among us," (or as it may be more literally rendered) "pitched his tabernacle among us." In conformity with which idea, and to prove to the Jews what St. John

And they buried her in the way to Ephratha, i. e. Bethlehem: and in the prophecy above; and Thou Bethlehem, the house of Ephratha. Behold, says he, we have heard it.—But it is certain that by *it* we are to understand the Birth of Christ; and the habitation of the God of Jacob: and what was the habitation of the God of Jacob, but the body of Christ himself, which was born at Bethlehem, in which, as in the *tabernacle of the only Son, the Divinity dwelt?* But, further, it is not barely said to be the *Tabernacle of God,* but with the addition of *the God of Jacob,* because *what* dwelt in it, was no other than that God who appeared to Jacob in the form and shape of a man." With the view of impressing the idea of our Lord's divinity still more strongly on the Jews, St. John proceeds to say, that he had seen his glory; alluding to the transaction on the mount when Jesus being transfigured, "his face did shine as *the* sun, and his raiment was white as the light; *and* a voice out of the cloud proclaimed him to be the beloved Son of God." Matt. xvii.—On this memorable occasion, Moses and Aaron appeared talking with Jesus; probably for the purpose of bearing testimony to the identity of our Saviour's character, and thereby convincing the attendant Apostles, that he was of a truth that divine Being, who had appeared in the same glorious form under the old Dispensation. In saying therefore, as St. John did

to

John had before attempted, that the same Divine Being which heretofore dwelt with the Israelites in the typical tabernacle in the wilderness, had come to dwell among them in the real tabernacle of his flesh; St. Paul, speaking of Christ, Heb. viii. 2. calls him "a minister of the *sanctuary*, and of the *true* tabernacle;" not of that *typical* one heretofore set up by man under the divine direction, but of that *true* tabernacle "which *the Lord pitched;*" that tabernacle which was built by the immediate interposition of Jehovah;—"when the Holy Ghost came upon the Virgin Mary, and the power of the Highest overshadowed her."—Luke i. 35.

"This one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all," 1 Tim. ii. 5. according to the faith delivered to the saint,

to the Jews, in his relation of the incarnation of *The Word*, that he "had beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father; "he gave them to understand, that *The Word* was *that Jehovah*, whose glory had heretofore possessed both the tabernacle and the temple; and consequently that in Him dwelt all the fulness of grace and truth.

and

and retained in our Church, was therefore "very God as well as very man." Art. ii. —"The WORD was made flesh."—The divine and human nature having been necessarily united in the Person of Christ, for the purpose of his being competent to the completion of the great work of Redemption, by becoming a proper and adequate atonement for the sins of mankind.

Such is the conclusion to which the foregoing Discourses were designed to lead, by bringing together the *evidence* borne by different parts of Scripture to the character and office of Jesus Christ; a conclusion, it is presumed, which will be considered decisive on these subjects, so long as the Bible shall be admitted to constitute the standard of Christian faith; no proposition carrying with it more irresistible evidence than this, that what God has affirmed, however incomprehensible to the human mind in its present state, must infallibly be true.

By comparing spiritual things with spiritual, with the view of making Scripture speak for itself; (on the supposition that we have made a faithful report of the evidence contained

contained in it,) we have brought the decision on the subject before us to a short issue; by reducing infidels of every description to the alternative, either of denying the divinity of the standard appealed to, or of admitting the conclusion which has here been determined by it. In this case it will not be found sufficient to set aside certain obnoxious texts, chapters, or even whole Gospels; the doctrine of atonement being so intimately blended with the general tenor of divine Revelation, that they who object to it, must go one step further; and by a sweeping clause discard at once the whole evidence of Scripture. For, as the great scheme of Redemption was laid in the divine councils before the world began; so since the fall, if the Bible be a consistent book, there has been but one covenant, the everlasting Gospel of peace; but one Mediator, whose priesthood is unchangeable; one faith, by which man can be saved; one hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ; "who of God is made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification and Redemption;"—"to whom be glory for ever."

To

To conclude; if, whilst others of my brethren have been laudably engaged in reforming the lives, and regulating the conduct of their fellow Christians by handling practical subjects, I have judged it more suitable to lay before them a connected series of Discourses on one great and fundamental doctrine; from the consideration that some circumstances have led me to trace our common faith to the fountain head, more than many others have been induced to do; and to study and contemplate some of the abstruser points of religion, more perhaps than most of my brethren under different circumstances have deemed necessary; I trust that my present undertaking will not, by a candid Public, be imputed to an affectation of displaying deep reading, but to the wish of contributing, in the way I judged myself best qualified, to the support of a cause, in which I am professionally engaged, and to which I am most cordially attached.

Whilst in return for any satisfaction the reader may derive from the perusal of my pages, and from this humble though earnest

nest endeavour to maintain " the faith once delivered to the Saints;" all I request of him is, to unite his prayers with mine, that God of his mercy would bring this mysterious subject of Atonement home to the heart of every Christian Professor; that dwelling with fervent gratitude, on the great theme of redeeming love, his life may bear uniform testimony to the soundness of his faith. At the same time may it be God's will, so to open the eyes of unbelievers of every description, that they may see the wondrous truths of his Law;— that all blindness, hardness of heart, and contempt of his word being taken away, " the earth (in the strong language of the prophet) may be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

FINIS.

INDEX

OF

PRINCIPAL MATTERS.

A.

Page

Altar one, one bishop - - - - - - - - - - 123
—— explained - - - - - - - - - - - - 127
Article VIIth - - - - - - - - - - - - 216
Agrippa, St. Paul's defence before him - - - 220
The force of it - - - - - - - - - - - - 221
Atonement, the ground on which the doctrine stands secure - - - - - - - - - - - 242
Allegory of the two Covenants - - - - - - - 246
Adam driven from Paradise, why - - - - - - 296
Analogy Trinitarian, by Jones - - - - - - - 304
Abel's Sacrifice, more excellent than that of Cain, why - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 306
Abel conformed to the instituted Ritual - - - 307
Abel *righteous*, in what sense - - - - - - - 310
Adam the second, recovers what the first Adam lost—how - - - - - - - - - - - - 348
Acceptable year of the Lord, the prophecy concerning it, fulfilled in Christ - - - - - - 352
Atonement, καταλλαγη explained - - - - - - 360
Altar, Jewish and Christian compared - - - - - 361
Archetype - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 396
Antitype - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 397

Page

Atonement doctrine of, restored to its original standard by the Apostles - - - - - 403, 404
——— Doctrine of, the Doctrine of Salvation through every Dispensation - - - - - 345

B.

Bishop one, one Church, or Parish - - - - - 83
This position never heard of till long since the Reformation - - - - - - - - - - - 86
Butler, quotation from him - - - - - - - - 142
Baptist John, his testimony - - - : - - - 214
Beloved, accepted in the—justified - - - - - 289
Blood *literally* applied cannot cleanse, therefore it was the sign - - - - - - - - - - 326
Berith, Purifier explained - - - - - - - - 327
Bondage in Egypt, an emblem - - - - - - - 349
Bought with a price, Christians - - - - - - 355
Blood not to be eaten by the Jews, why - - - 359
Blood of Christ the *very* blood of Atonement - 440

C.

Church Government, a certain model of, admitted 52
——— a regular system *not* found in Scripture, furnishes no decisive argument against it - - - - - - - - - - - - 53
Christian Church formed on model of the Jewish Temple - - - - - - - - - - - - - 61
Clemens misinterpreted by Dr. Campbell - - - 62
Campbell's Dr. coarse language - - - - - - - 84
Cartwright. Clarkson - - - - - - - - - - 89
Church polity reviled - - - - - - - - - - 137

Page

Circumstantials and essentials improperly opposed to each other - - - - - - - - - - - 141
Chesterfield's Lord, saying applied to Dr. C. - - 133
Chrysostom, of the connection between the Law and Gospel - - - - - - - - - - - 245
Covenants two, meet in Christ - - - - - - - 246
Christ distinguished from all other teachers - - 256
Christ—Wisdom, in what sense - - - - - - - 261
Cherubim. Emblematic representation, &c. - 298
——— the use of it - - - - - - - - - - - 299
——— what it was - - - - - - - - - - - 300
Cain's sacrifice rejected, why - - - - - - - - 308
Cain did not well; how to be understood - - - 311
Correspondence between the symbol and the letter of Christianity - - - - - - - - - - 334
Christ must be received in his compleat character 342
Celsus - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 411

D.

Diocesan Episcopacy maintained by Dr. Maurice 129
Divinity Christ's—Dr. Priestley's proposal - - 180
Dispensations of God the same in every age - - 225
Difference between Christ and other teachers - 256
Dispensation, no new one to be expected - - - 257
Death came into the world—how - - - - - - 344
Devil the, found no Redeemer, why - - - - - 345
—— his malice foreseen and provided against - - 346
Dignus vindice nodus - - - - - - - - - - 380
Divine Attributes to be judged of by the corresponding qualities in the human mind - - 389
Devil disappointed by the plan of Redemption - 399

David

Page

David looked to Christ - - - - - - - - - 403
Different case of Jew and Gentile with respect to the Gospel - - - - - - - - - - - - 422

E.

Eusebius's Account of the Christian Altar - - - 58
Episcopacy, what Dr. C. says against it, equally militates against Church government of every kind - - - - - - - - - - - 49, 50
Episcopacy. Beza and Calvin's Opinion of it - 86, 87
Episcopal Church, Scotch, illiberal attack upon it by Dr. Campbell - - - - - - - - - 139
Evanson - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 204
Ellis's Enquiry about natural Religion - - - - 264
Expiation under the Law, figurative - - - - 319
——— the great day of it—its service - - - 320
Egyptian bondage emblematical of what - - - 349
Egypt, Redemption from—applied - - - - 356
Evangelical covenant, the foundation of it - - - 378
Emblems of Christianity corrupted by the Heathens - - - - - - - - - - - - - 386
Eternal life, the Gift of God through Christ - - 398

F.

Faith true, the ground of Christian practice - - 182
———, not an empty profession - - - 192, 193
Faith one, Christian - - - - - - - - - - 224
Finished it is—Christ's work on earth - - 258.330
Faith, justification by it, not the language of the Law - - - - - - - - - - - - - 388

G.

Page
Grotius, quotation from him - - - - - - - - 57
Gospel, the Law fulfilled - - - - - - - - - 200
———, more ancient than the Law - - - - ibid
Gospel covenant, the knowledge of it not confined to the days subsequent to our Saviour - - 244
————, by the terms of it, man's final condition to be determined - - - - - - - - 259
Gentile converts, representatives of us Christians— Conclusion from thence - - - - - - - 285
Garments washed *white* in blood explained - - 328
Gospel the, preached to the Hebrews - - - - 437
————, preached to Abraham - - - - - - 438
Gospel to be read in the Law and the Law in the Gospel - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 438

H.

Hickes Dr. an inconsequential reasoner. Disproved - - - - - - - - - - - - - 73, 74
Hales Dr. - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 241
Heathens, Dr. Clarke places their case in the most favourable light - - - - - - - - - - 264
Hutchinson - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 304
Holocaust, what - - - - - - - - - - - 307
Heathenism, rites of it derived from the true religion - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 312
Homer. Horace - - - - - - - - - - - - 410
Heathenism bears testimony to Christianity - - 411
Hebrews, Epistle to the, object of it - - - - - 437

I.

Page

Jerom, an important passage from him, taken no notice of by Dr. Campbell - - - - - - - 64
Justin Martyr's authority misrepresented - 68. 102
Ignatius's authority misrepresented - - - - - - 107
Jerom's authority for episcopacy - - - - - - - 110
Jew the, connecting medium between the Law and the Gospel - - - - - - - - - - - - 219
Jesus Christ the Alpha and Omega of all the divine dispensations - - - - - - - - - 234
Inspector. Dr. Hales - - - - - - - - - - 241
Justin Martyr of the Law and Gospel - - - - 245
Infidel, both Jew and Christian, to be led from the Jewish Temple into the Christian Church - 248
Jew converted, picture of him - - - - - - - 251
Jews erred through ignorance of their Scriptures - 247
Isaiah LIII. passage in it explained - - - - 276
Justified, what - - - - - - - - - - - - 289
Justification, consequence of Christ's Redemption 290
Jubilee year of, a type of general Redemption - 350
Just One, the name of, applied - - - - - - - 274
Jews the, stumbled at the threshold of Christianity 421
Justice of God in the justification of man proved 442
Justin Martyr's testimony concerning the Heathen philosophers - - - - - - - - - - - - 448

K.

Kirk Scotch - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 137
Knowledge of Christ's character necessary - - 259
Knowledge unprofitable that does not lead up to God - - - - - - - - - - - - 270
Kenn Bishop - - - - - - - - - - - - 414

L.

Page

Life everlasting offered both in the Old and New Testament. Proved - - - - - - 30, et seq.
Line to be drawn between the presumption of philosophy and that of ignorance - - - - 175
Law, the spriritual - - - - - - - - - - - 200
——, the Gospel typified - - - - - - - - ibid
Life eternal in the Scriptures of the Old Testament 202
Law typical, the design of it - - - - - - - 209
——, a shadow of good things - - - - - - 210
——, superseded by the Gospel - - - - - - 211
Lamb of God - - - - - - - - - - - - 214
Law the, not for the Jews alone - - - - - - 217
——, preparatory to a more perfect Dispensation - 227
——, a connecting medium - - - - - - - 232
——, Christ the end of it for Righteousness - - 278
——, a schoolmaster - - - - - - - - - ibid
——, the Jews looked to it for Salvation - - - 279
——, fulfilled by Christ - - - - - - - - 280
—— the original design of it - - - - - - 314
—— absolutely necessary - - - - - - - - 315
—— ceremonial added to the moral; why - - 317
—— moral, added in another sense - - - - - 318
—— ceremonial valuable, in what sense - - - ibid
Lamb of God, true paschal - - - - - - - 320
———— a title which could not be applied to our Saviour as a mere teacher - - - - 454

M.

Maurice Dr. - - - - - - - - - - - - - 89
Maclaurin - - - - - - - - - - - - - 166

Page

Moses's Law had its proper signification - - 215
Miracles bear testimony to the character of our Saviour, rather than to his doctrine - - - 237
Miracles and prophecy, argument from them compared - - - - - - - - - - - - - 238
Maurice's Oriental Trinities - - - - - - - - 303
Man bought by the *Evil One* - - - - - - - 356
Mere Man, Jesus Christ could not be, for as such he could not have been a Ransom for man - 368
Man no, can redeem his brother. Argument from it applied to Christ - - - - - - - - - 370
Meath, Bishop of - - - - - - - - - - - - 420
Mind of man like a Mirror - - - - - - - - 420
Mysteries rejected, because they are what they should be, why - - - - - - - - - - - 424

N.

Newton Sir Isaac - - - - - - - - - - - - 166
Natural Religion, an idol - - - - - - - - - 196
——————— the state of it at the coming of Christ in the flesh - - - - - - - - - 264
——————— called the elder brother of Revelation - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 266
——————— the wretched state of its professors when the Gospel was first preached - - - ibid
Name of *The Just One* applied and explained - 274

O.

Old Testament not contrary to the New - - - 155
Old and New Testament, different signs of - - - 199
Old and New Testament brought together - - 245
Obedience perfect, the condition of the first covenant - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 344

P.

Page

Priest, a word not used in the Christian Church by the Apostles, why - - - - - - - - 56, 57
Priesthood Christian maintained - - - - - - - 69
Paley Dr. unscriptural - - - - - - - - - 81
Parish, its original meaning investigated - 96, et seq.
Presbyters not Bishops - - - - - - - - - 112
Primitive Church, imaginary idea about it - - 114
——————— described by St. Luke - - - 115
Priestley Dr. - - - - - - - - - - 162. 180. 182
Prophecy, the declared use of it - - - - - - 204
——— evidence from it - - - - - - - - 238
Priestley's Dr. Letter to a young man - - - - 240
Philosophy Heathen, state of it - - - - - - 263
Presence of the Lord, what meant by it - - - 310
Priest High under the Law, the Type of Christ - 321
——————— both representative - - - - - - 322
Priest Christ, not a on earth, why - - - 324
Paschal Lamb an emblem - - - - - - - - 349
Passover Christ our, applied - - - - - - - 357
Prophet, Jesus Christ not only a the consequence of receiving him only in that character - - 366
Priestly Dr. - - - - - - - - - - - - - 429

Q.

Questions important, proposed to those who object to our Saviour's character as Lamb of God - - - - - - - - - - 451, 452, 453
Quotation from Justin Martyr in reference to the consistency of Scripture - - - - - - - 463

R.

Page

Religion natural not the foundation of Revelation 19, &c.
Revelation the only source of divine knowledge - 155
Religion, not variable - - - - - - - - - - 170
Resurrection, not the only essential article; according to Dr. Priestley - - - - - - - 182
Redemption by Christ the most essential - - - 187
Revelation must be consistent - - - - - - 198
——— all parts of it must meet - - - - - 236
——— Doctrine of it must be uniform - - ibid
——— parts must be in unison - - - - - 239
Religion of reason, an idol - - - - - - - 247
Righteousness, Jesus Christ properly so - - - - 273
——— commutative - - - - - - - 276
——— to the Jew first - - - - - - 277
Righteousness of the Jew on a false foundation - 281
——— argument of the Apostle on it - - 282
Righteousness, Jesus Christ to the Gentiles in what sense - - - - - - - - - - 283, 284
Righteousness, Jesus Christ made unto us, how - 288
——— Christ's, not *ours*, but imputed - - 290
Redemption pre-supposes bondage; applied to Christ - - - - - - - - - - - 342
Ransom, Christ a - - - - - - - - - - 354
Redeemer, Christ our, in what sense - - - - 363
Reason to, and to conjecture the difference - - 372
Ransom for *all*, Christ - - - - - - - - 375
Right to the Tree of Life explained - - - - - 400
Righteousness our, the Lord. Jer. xxiii. 6. explained - - - - - - - - - - - - ibid
Reason not to be set up in opposition to Revelation - - - - - - - - - - - - 406
Reason, its proper office - - - - - - - - ibid

Page

Rennel Dr. - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 412
Reason the friend of Revelation - - - - - - - 350
Recapitulation - - - - - - - - - - - - 46.

S.

Scotch Kirk - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 137
Simeon's testimony to Christ - - - - - - - - 213
Sacrifices before and since the coming of Christ - 217
Salvation through Christ the creed of the faithful under every Dispensation - - - - - - - 223
Sacrifice, the essence both Law and Gospel - - 248
Salvation, only through Christ - - - - - - - 259
Socrates' death - - - - - - - - - - - - - 268
Sacrifice not founded in reason - - - - - - - 302
Superstition, the corruption of Revelation - - - ibid
Sacrifice, abuse of it proves its divine origin - - 303
Saviour of Rest - - - - - - - - - - - - - 307
Sacrifice of Cain—that of a Deist. Of Abel—that of a Christian - - - - - - - - - - - 311
Shadow and reality could not coexsist under the same Dispensation, applied to the priesthood of the Law and Gospel - - - - - - - - 324
——— reasoning upon it applied - - - - - - 325
Sanctification Christ in what sense - - - - - - 330
———— both to Jew and Gentile - - - - - 332
Scape goat - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 386
Syllogism of the Apostles argument - - - - - 394
Sacrifices ineffectual, why - - - - - - - - 395
Society for promoting Christian knowledge - - 412
Scripture the standard of infallibility - - - - - 427
Sacrifice speaks the same language under every Dispensation - - - - - - - - - - - 432

Page

Sacrifice offensive to the deity, why - - - - - 434
Sacrifices legal, their inefficacy - - - - - 435
——— taken away by Christ - - - - - - - 436
Science true, comparison of true Christianity - 450
Sacrifices Heathen, αντιψυχα - - - - - - - - 467
Son of man, more than man, and yet not an angel.
Conclusion from thence - - - - - - - 473

T

Tertullian's testimony relative to the Primitive Church - - - - - - - - - - - - 117
Temple Jewish, and Christian Church, the correspondence between them—proof of Christianity - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 157
Testament Old and New illustrate each other - - 159
Type, evidence for the time present - - - - 204
Type and prophecy, distinction between - - - 205
Types, pictures, &c. - - - - - - - - - - 208
Testaments, Jesus Christ the substance of both - 199
Types, sober use of them - - - - - - - - - 228
—— imaginary and real - - - - - - - - 229
—— pictures referring to originals - - - - 230
—— a proof of the truth of Christianity - - - 234
—— argument from them applies immediately to the Doctrine of the Cross - - - - - 239
Temple a type of the body of Christ - - - - 279
Tree of Life an emblem - - - - - - - - 294
Temporal Redemption at the Year of Jubilee a type of spiritual Redemption by Christ - - 350
Testimony of Scripture competent - - - - - 426
Texts of Scripture not repugnant to each other - 463

Page

Temple, type of Christ's body applied and explained - - - - - - - - - - - - - 474
The True Tabernacle, Christ's body - - - - - 475

U.

Unitarian compared with the Jew - - - - - - 178
Unsafe condition of - - - - - - - - - - 179
Understanding, pride of, to be sacrificed to Revelation - - - - - - - - - - - - - 193
Unbelievers supposed wiser than other men, why 372

V.

Vitringa - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 54
Visible things—the image of invisible - - - - 297
Vail of the Temple rent, explained - - - - - 331
Vincent Dr. - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 414

W.

Warburton Bishop, paradoxical - - - - - - - 14
Worthies, testimony borne to them by St. Paul - 224
Wise men to, the preaching of the Cross, foolishness 269
Wisdom true - - - - - - - - - - - - - 270
Wise men of the Heathen world, God's object in humbling them - - - - - - - - - - 271
Wisdom true, and vain contrasted - - - - - - 272
Wisdom to the Gentile, Jesus - - - - - - - 273
Wisdom of this world - - - - - - - - - - 287
The *Word* of God - - - - - - - - - - - 336
Wise *above* what is written, and *against*, the difference—both dangerous - - - - - - - - 373

INDEX.

Wages of sin, death - - - - - - - - - - 378
Winchester College - - - - - - - - - - 415
Witnesses cloud of, assembled to see the Christian race - - - - - - - - - - - - 444
Word made flesh, why - - - - - - - - - 478

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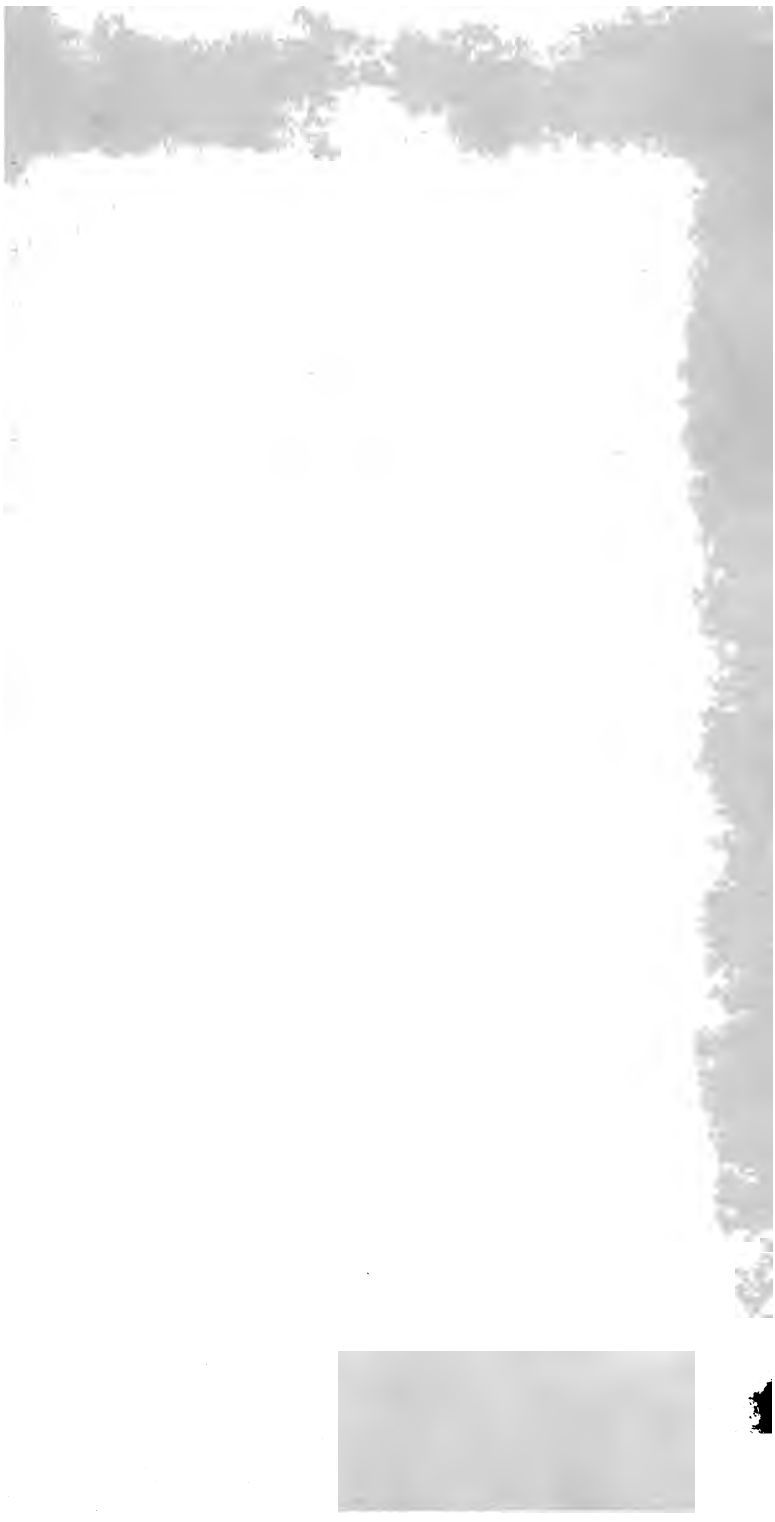

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